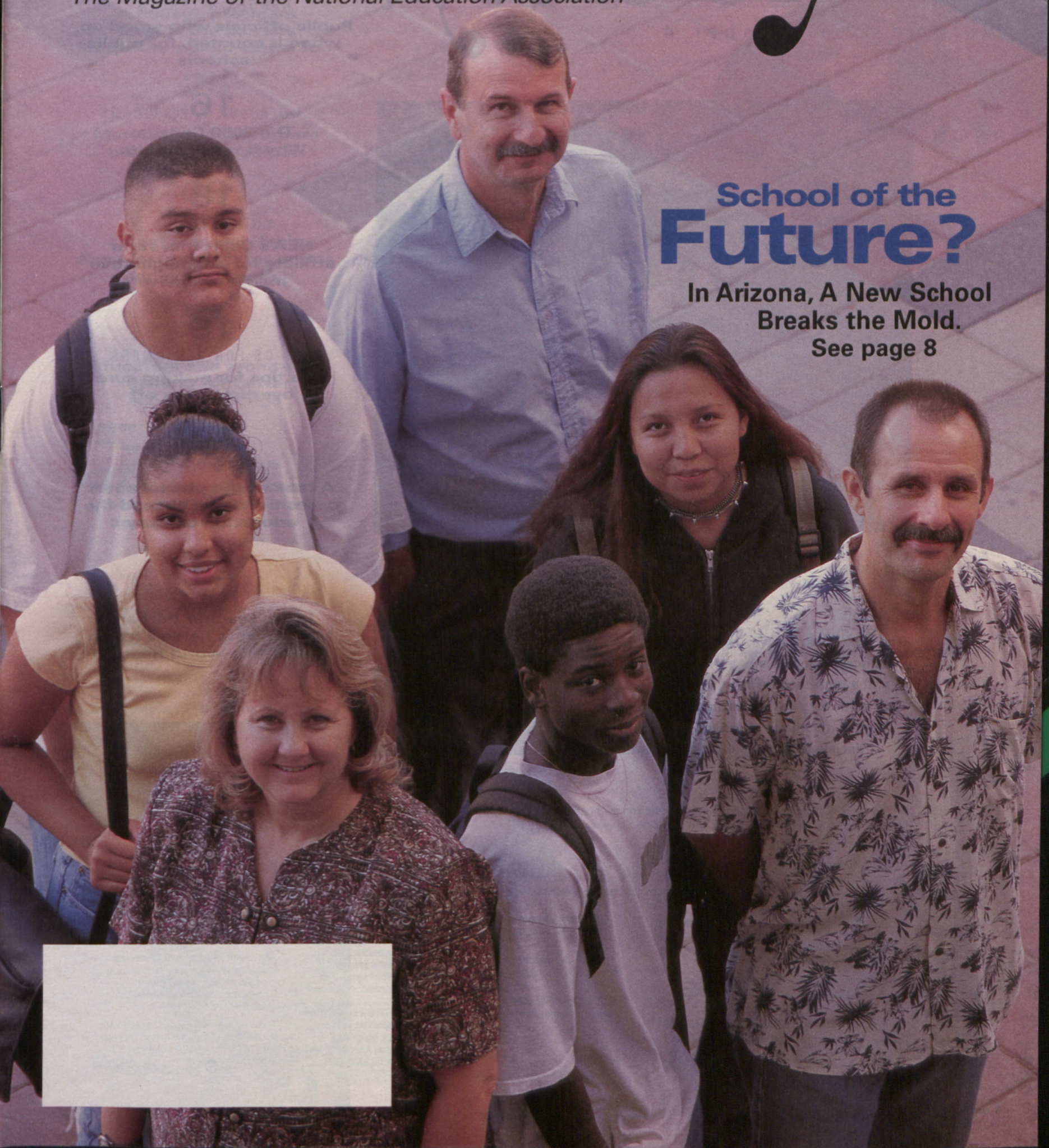
JANUARY 2000

# NEA Today

The Magazine of the National Education Association

For great yields on your savings, see page 30.



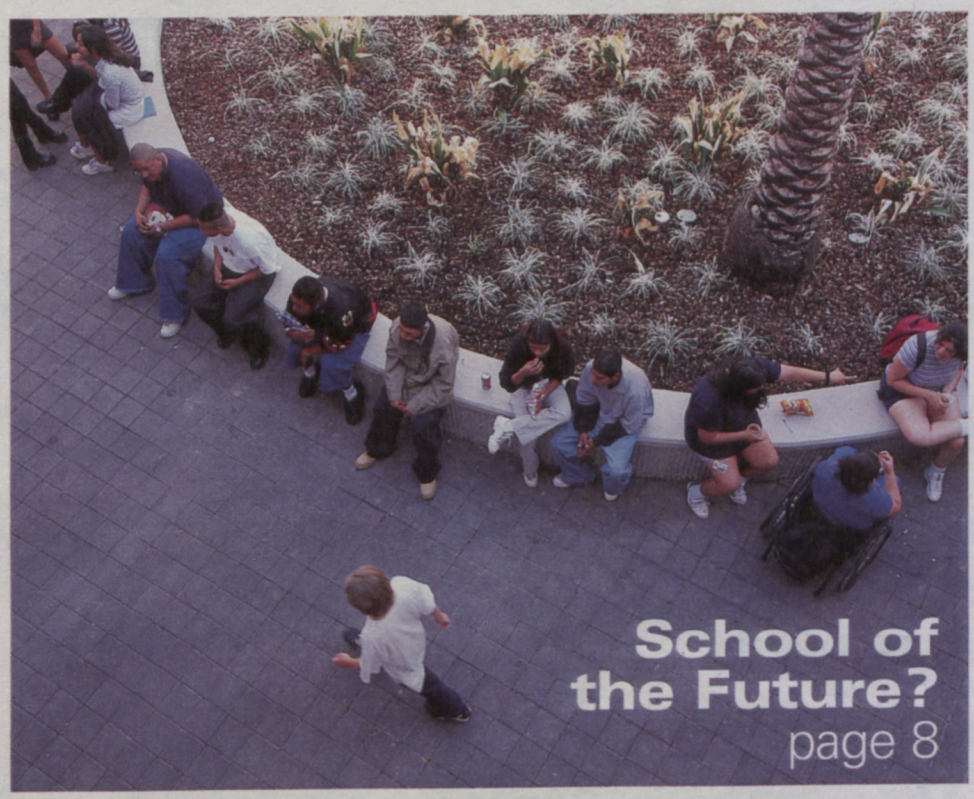
## School of the Future?

**In Arizona, A New School Breaks the Mold.**

**See page 8**

# NEA Today

Volume 18 • Number 4

**School of the Future?**
page 8

## COVER STORY

**The new Cesar Chavez High just outside Phoenix boasts a beautiful courtyard and a high-tech learning environment. But what may really distinguish Chavez High is its unique approach to making decisions and organizing students.**

On the cover: Cesar Chavez High School students and staff gather in the courtyard of their brand-new school in metropolitan Phoenix. Cover photo by Don Stevenson.

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special focus on the new millennium


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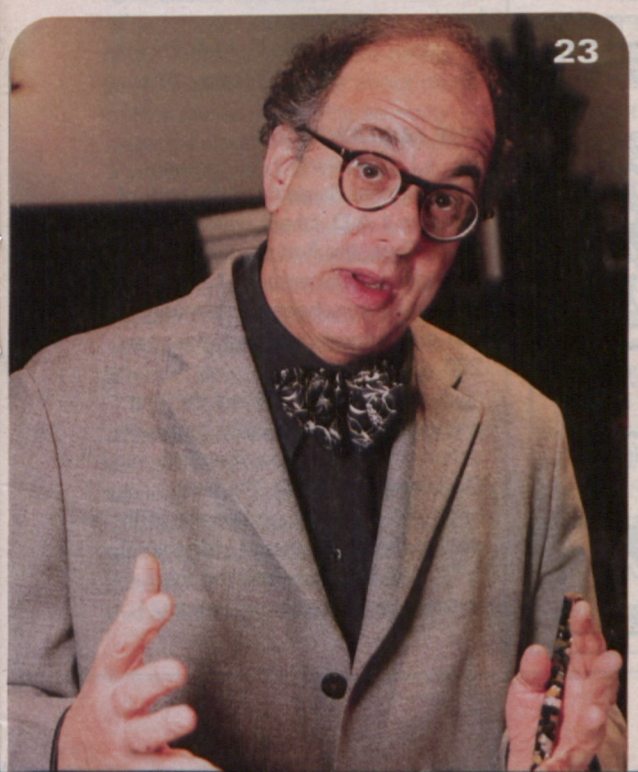



## NEA at a Glance

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# Letters

## GUN CONTROL

The results of the poll regarding stronger gun control laws making schools safer, posted in the November 1999 issue, attributes the 99 percent disagreement to excessive nonmember participation (Debate). This may have had an influence. But I would find it much easier to believe that NEA members made up the majority of those polled. I certainly would not believe that 99 out of 100 Americans think stronger gun control measures would have no effect, but definitely a majority.

Mark Carris
Grand Junction, Colorado

I am glad to see that so many people responded on the gun control law debate (Letters, November). As a teacher I feel NEA has been exclusive in its presentation of gun control laws, as has the media in the papers and publications.

Our schools were safer when 30 percent of the kids had their guns in their cars and trucks in the parking lot. These were kids involved in shooting activities and hunting. Now we have made them criminals with the stroke of a pen.

Dwight Morgan
Kettle Falls, Washington

## UNDERSTANDING ACNE

Your November health column was informative and provided an excellent overview about acne and its effect on self-esteem.

However, on Accutane, a bolder statement must be made. Accutane is severely teratogenic. It is a substance that interferes with normal prenatal development and can lead to abnormalities in a fetus. So all females must be on contraceptives before starting a prescription.

Accutane should be used only after conventional measures fail. Some physicians will prescribe Accutane without a contraceptive, once they feel they can trust a young woman's word that she is not sexually active. But to do so is risky. This is another area where health education is a must.

Barbara Miller
Fresno, California

## MIDDLE SCHOOLS

It was surprising to note that your November 1999 article on middle schools (FYI) neglected to cite some critical prerequisites for success: appropriate size of school and class and basic teacher training in developmental education.

The profession may not have responded adequately to the unique needs of pre-adolescents. Instruction must match diverse student needs, interests, and abilities. Students should be receiving instruction appropriate to their achievement levels, through flexible scheduling.

Adult authority and caring is a key to positive and productive relationships with these youngsters. Family, friends, and schools provide the support and feedback that go into balanced personal development. Bottom line: a better individual self-image, which is so vital to the ability to learn and to get along in this world.

Norm Goldman
Hopewell, New Jersey

## PARAEDUCATORS

I am responding to Pat Philipp's letter in the November edition. She was offended that you had printed an article about a school district hiring "aides" so that teachers could have a duty-free lunch. She felt that your article was disrespectful to paraeducators.

I would like to know if Pat gets a "duty-free" lunch, and, if so, why would she have a problem with teachers receiving the same break? If not, the problem lies within her local district. The paraeducators in her school need to talk to their local representatives and possibly file a grievance.

Paraeducators are not teachers. Would a paralegal expect to receive the same privileges as a lawyer? I think not. If so, then why did I invest $40,000 in a college education when I could have been a "paraeducator"?

Don't get me wrong: Paraeducators are a valuable part of the education process. I have a wonderful para whom I could not live without.

Renae Hanson
Minneota, Minnesota

## SCHOOL VOUCHERS

I find your attack on vouchers interesting to say the least (Cover Story, November). If our inner city public schools were not a total failure, we would not have vouchers. It seems to me that the effort and money spent on legislation and rhetoric since the introduction of school vouchers would be better invested in our inner city public schools. Maybe a fraction of the time and money spent to fight vouchers could be spent on the problems faced by our sisters and brothers in the Milwaukee Public Schools. Let's ask them what effort their union has put forth to make vouchers a non-issue.

Jeffrey A. Eastlick
Belmont, Wisconsin

## NFL AND VOUCHER PLANS

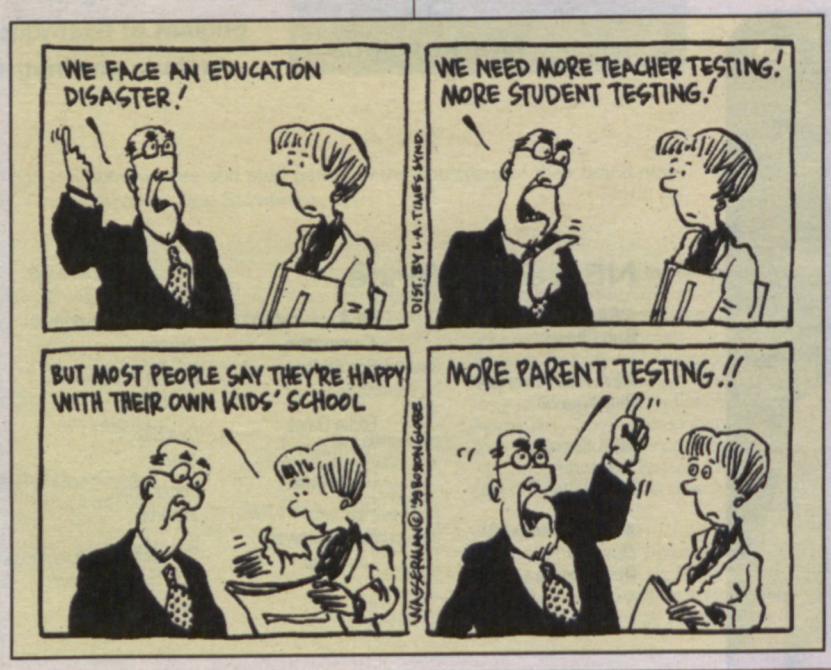
I am alarmed at the state of the National Football League. I have noticed that for the past several years almost 50 percent of the teams are finishing in the lower half of the standings! We need to stand fast against mediocrity! We must increase the level of competition to help all teams succeed!

In order to make all teams successful, I propose identifying the teams that fall in the bottom half of the NFL for three successive years as "failed teams." An improvement plan would then encourage the "failed" team's top players to move to a winning team where they could succeed.

Additionally, I would significantly reduce the amount of money the "failed" team has to spend on salaries and other support. The failed team, left without quality players and no money, would clearly see the need to excel. Under this plan, I dream that all teams would finish undefeated and go on to the Super Bowl. And the world will be a better place!

Wait a minute—this is beginning to remind me of the new voucher plan in Florida (and others like it)! Never mind!

Jim Landen
Cheyenne, Wyoming


WE FACE AN EDUCATION DISASTER!
WE NEED MORE TEACHER TESTING! MORE STUDENT TESTING!
DIST. BY L.A. TIMES SYND.
BUT MOST PEOPLE SAY THEY'RE HAPPY WITH THEIR OWN KIDS' SCHOOL
MORE PARENT TESTING!!
WASSERMAN © '99 BOSTON GLOBE

## TEACHER COMPENSATION

I am a middle school teacher in Helena, Montana, and I am writing to ask that you do *much* more to get the public behind the need to pay teachers a higher salary.

Everyone wants wonderful people to teach their children. But when our salaries are so low, who is going into education? Are our best and brightest going into education? The answer is no.

Some of the teachers I work with are saying they will refuse to help their children go to college if they go into education. Our son is a beginning teacher, and his friend told us he blamed us for our son going into education. Said this friend: "He could have been so much more."

Now, do you think his friend would have said this if our son was making a salary to be envied? Charter schools and vouchers have nothing to do with this, so get off that "bandwagon" and start pushing what will really make a difference in our schools. Teachers need to have salaries that make people want to go into the profession and stay there.

Brenda Price
Helena, Montana

## HEROES & ZEROES

In the October 1999 issue on page 12 in "Heroes and Zeroes" you assign a Zero to Pennsylvania's governor for allowing "10-day wonders" into the profession on alternative certification. Yet, on the very next page you use a feature article to laud United Teachers of Los Angeles for "40 hours of practical training" for teachers hired with emergency credentials.

These two programs sound too similar to be differentiated in such a harsh manner.

Julie G, Neff-Encinas
Tucson, Arizona

## THE MILLENNIUM

As I understand it, our present calendar dates from the birth of Christ in 1 A.D. (there was no 0 year). Thus, the first century ended on midnight, December 31, 100. The second century began on January 1, 101 and extended through the year 200.

Consequently, it follows that our present century, the 20th, began on January 1, 1901 and will end on December 31, 2000. We have another full year to go into the 20th century and the second millennium!

The 21st century and the third millennium will begin on January 1,

2001. That is why Stanley Kubrick titled his famous film "2001" and not "2000."

Jack Arisian
Watertown, Conneticut

## Let's Talk

**Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:**

- By mail: Write to Letters, NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday and click on "Submit a Letter to the Editor"
- By E-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org
- By Fax: 202/822-7206
- By Phone: 202/822-7201

*Letters are edited for length and clarity.*

### TEXT AS TOOL

Having an older text can be a great advantage. Our world language texts are 15 years old. We only use the books to provide us with the general sequence of topics that need to be covered. As a result, the text determines what topic we teach, not how we teach.

With the textbook as a guide, each teacher has the freedom to be creative in the interpretation of the curriculum according to students' needs. We are not tied into a fixed instructional format developed by a publisher, which can result in a "turn the page/write the answer" methodology.

We can emphasize practical world language usage, interject changing state of the art methodologies, and provide real-life television programming, Internet usage, and multicultural understanding.

This keeps us all on the same page, so to speak, and ensures that all students receive instruction that meets state and national standards.

Gregory Farlow
Thompson, Conneticut

### ON SKIN COLOR

I find it very disturbing that some of our minority children are having such negative thoughts about themselves and experiencing so many negative vibes from society at such a young age (My Turn, October).

Many of our children are not getting the emotional support and sense of security from home, which makes them vulnerable to feelings of inferiority. These inadequate feelings spill over into the classroom and affect their academic performance.

It's time to stop blaming all the ills of society for corrupting our children and put the blame where it belongs—with our family structure.

Children are conditioned at a very young age to either respect different cultures or dislike them. Whether this conditioning is deliberate or accidental, our children grow up with a certain mindset.

If we are to survive as a nation, families must make a concentrated effort to teach their children about various ethnic groups and proper patterns of thinking and behaving.

I teach a self-contained class of special education students at the high school level. I asked them, "What color is beautiful?" and "What color do you have to be in order to be pretty?"

Most of the students gave me a specific color. But one student responded: "Any color you've got!"

Georgette Dredge
Houston, Texas

### SCHOOL REFORM

I am a long-time member of NEA and a subscriber to *Investor's Business Daily* newspaper. The October 28 *IBD* published the 106th article in its continuing series on "Education in Crisis."

This newspaper is such a wonderful tool for investment and financial education that I find it difficult to think of giving up my subscription, but I am almost always infuriated with its articles on education. There is usually a grain of truth buried within each article, obscured by bias, half-truths, apparent ignorance of the real issues, or deceptive intent.

This is a very influential newspaper, whose target audience is not teachers but investors, people who have access to money and thereby to power. Please designate at least one staff member, someone knowledgeable in investments, someone who can speak the language of economics, to monitor these articles, address the issues, and at least reply to some of the articles.

Floy Lancaster
Duncan, Oklahoma

### MICHIGAN CHARTERS

I just want to comment on the charter school problem we are having in Lansing.

We have a fairly transient population. A student may start the year in a charter school and then transfer into our district after count day. Guess who gets the money for that student! It's not us.

This year we had 17 students transfer into our school the day after count day.

I believe our district receives around $6,400 per student per year. We have two count days per year. Seventeen students at $3,200—this means that our school alone lost over $50,000 on that day.

I would also like to add that when students come to us from the local charter schools, they are frequently a year behind. We also have great difficulty getting records from the schools when a child transfers in.

Deanna Eby
Lansing, Michigan

## President's Viewpoint

BY BOB CHASE

# Seuss and Substance

### Beyond 'Read Across America'

For Gloria Siciliano, the new millennium will start with a blizzard of red-and-white striped top hats because, once again, Dr. Seuss is on the loose. Siciliano is now preparing 1,000 students in her Phoenix, Arizona, high school to read to 20,000 elementary school children during NEA's Read Across America on March 2.

All across the country, plans for our annual NEA celebration of literacy are in high gear. The New York Stock Exchange has invited the Cat in the Hat to ring the March 2 opening bell. On that same day, rock stars read at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. And newspapers are revving up to participate in a "Write What's Right!" essay contest featuring the Dr. Seuss book *The Sneetches*.

NEA's Read Across America is becoming a noble and necessary national day of reading, and we can be proud of our achievement. But for America to become truly a literate nation, a one-day celebration, as we all realize, simply isn't enough.

For America's children to go all the places they need to go, all of us in NEA need to help ensure that every single child can read at grade level by the end of third grade. In short, we need to match our celebration with substance.

Toward this end, this month's *NEA Today* is featuring a new tool that can indeed help us reach our end-of-third-grade goal. On page 42, you'll find a review of what we think is the "Reading Resource of the Year," our choice for the year's single best work on the teaching of reading.

**"NEA members need to help ensure that every single child can read at grade level by the end of the third grade. In short, we need to match our celebration with substance."**

This important, groundbreaking new resource is from the New Literacy Standards Project. It's titled *Reading and Writing, Grade by Grade, Primary Literacy Standards for Kindergarten through Grade Three.*

Forged by a diverse group of reading experts, *Reading and Writing* fuses the best from whole language and phonics, the two approaches to teaching reading that have been doing war against each other for far too many years. This new book represents a triumph of common sense, after years of ideological battling.

Within *Reading and Writing*, you'll find sensible standards that can help students achieve. These standards are simple. They are straightforward. And, in *Reading and Writing*, they are illustrated by vignettes that show, level by level, exactly what students who meet the standards are able to do.

Add to these print descriptions the two CDs that accompany the *Reading and Writing* book, and you have a truly wonderful resource for both teachers and parents.

How can we help parents see the importance of paying more attention to resources like *Reading and Writing*? That's where NEA's Read Across America comes in. Over the past two years, hundreds of thousands of NEA members have used Read Across America activities to spotlight the joy—and importance—of reading.

How about you? Ready to join in the fun? Ready to participate this year in NEA's Read Across America? To get more information about the Sneetches writing contest and hundreds of other events around the country, just check the Web at www.nea.org/readacross.

Let me close with a personal request. This year, NEA's Read Across America is going to be emphasizing tips for parents who want to help their children become terrific readers. We're looking for tips to share. Have some? To forward your tips via E-mail, just follow the instructions on the Read Across America Web site. Thanks!

*Comments? You can E-mail Bob Chase at BobChase@nea.org. If you would like a response, please be sure to include your name and NEA local affiliate.*

# CREATIVITY SPARKS LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Margaret Beeks Elementary School, Blacksburg, Virginia

Richard E. Byrd Community Academy, Chicago, Illinois

Cedar Park Elementary School, Trumann, Arkansas

Emerson/Bandini Elementary School, San Diego, California

Evergreen Elementary School, Monroeville, Pennsylvania

Charles M. Fortes Magnet Academy, Providence, Rhode Island

Lawndale Consortium, Lawndale, California

Jane Addams Elementary School
- William Anderson Elementary School
- William Green Elementary School
- Billy Mitchell Elementary School
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Elementary School
- Mark Twain Elementary School

Roxbury Consortium, Roxbury, Massachusetts
- Mission Hill School
- The Young Achievers Science and Math Pilot School

Mobile Consortium, Mobile, Alabama
- Craighead Elementary School
- George Hall Elementary School
- Maryvale Elementary School
- Woodcock Elementary School

Julia B. Morrison Elementary School, Norwalk, California

Patagonia Elementary School, Patagonia, Arizona

Portland Consortium, Portland, Oregon
- Boise-Eliot Elementary School
- D.A. Grout Elementary School
- Woodmere Elementary School

Riverbend Elementary School, Springfield, Oregon

San Francisco Community School,
San Francisco, California

Seba Dalkai Boarding School, Winslow, Arizona

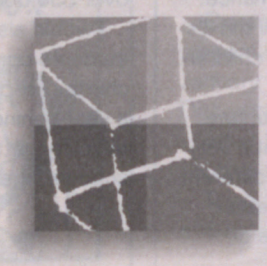
Overland Park Consortium, Overland Park, Kansas
- Arrowhead Elementary School
- Nall Hills Elementary School
- Overland Park Elementary School
- Westwood View Elementary School

Swan Valley Elementary School, Irwin, Idaho

West Marion Elementary, Marion, North Carolina

Disney Learning Partnership, a new philanthropic initiative of The Walt Disney Company, is honored to announce its support of innovative approaches to learning in 32 public elementary schools through its *Creative Learning Communities* grant program. In its first major round of funding, the *Creative Learning Communities* grant program will provide three-year grants totaling $6 million to these schools, primarily in underserved communities throughout the nation, in which teachers and administrators have collaboratively designed creative solutions to key learning challenges facing their school population. Side by side with community organizations and parents, these schools have set about building innovative learning environments which foster children's curiosity, stimulate their imagination, and effectively engage them in learning.

Disney Learning Partnership seeks to support the grassroots genius of American educators in solving some of the critical learning challenges facing the nation. With this flagship philanthropic effort, The Walt Disney Company hopes to ignite the spark of creativity and the joy of learning in every child.



Disney Learning Partnership

# Dial T for Teacher

## Students in this rural Maine community can reach their teacher by phone at home. E-mail is next.

BY LYNN BONSEY

It's Sunday night. I'm at the computer typing my lesson plans when the phone rings. "Hi, Miss Bonsey, this is Kate. Is it possible to get an extension on my Thanksgiving essay? I'm waiting for my grandfather to call, so I can find out if I'm related to the Pilgrims."

"No problem," I say. "Once you find out, writing your essay will be much easier."

"That's just what I thought. Thanks, Miss B."

Moments later the phone rings again. This time it's Daniel.

"Miss Bonsey, you know how we're supposed to watch the local news tonight? Well, I can't."

"Oh? Why not?"

"We have a satellite dish, and we don't get local stations."

"O.K. I'm taping the local news anyway, so you can watch it tomorrow in class."

"Thanks a lot, Miss B."

As I hang up the phone, I marvel at the many ways providing my phone number to my students has made a difference to them—and to me.

Each Monday I distribute an assignment sheet that details the week's work and features my home phone number. As I review the sheet in class, I remind my sixth and seventh graders that if they have any homework questions, or run into any glitches, they must call me.

And call they do. They call to say they've forgotten books, misplaced papers, or are confused about assignments. They even call to remind me that I've forgotten to pass out a worksheet.

Occasionally they phone me for personal advice. Other times they just want to know when the next ball game is, or, on snowy mornings, if school's been canceled. Sometimes they call simply to share good news.

***Maine teacher Lynn Bonsey encourages students to call her at home.***

Caleb Raynor

Because I use my home phone as a teaching and communication tool, my students quickly learn to use their voices to become self-directed, productive learners. Both in my class and at home, they feel free to speak up and ask for help.

By doing so, they discover the art and power of negotiation: "I'm sorry, but I didn't get home until midnight. Could you please give me one more day to finish my book?"

An added plus: Students get to practice proper phone etiquette.

My phone policy takes very little personal time. On average, I field a couple of calls a night. Because my students know that I'm busy, they don't call during certain hours, and they honor my request to leave clear, concise messages when I'm unavailable.

I think it's a testament to the mutual respect we share that I rarely receive frivolous or crank calls.

My teaching partner has noticed. He has asked me to add his phone number to my assignment sheet.

Besides enhancing relationships with my students, the "off-duty" time I invest on the phone actually simplifies my teaching life and *saves* me time. To better plan the next day's lesson, I'm apt to pick up the phone myself and check in with struggling students.

Because kids know they can call me, I rarely have to deal with parental concerns—and when parents do have questions, they don't hesitate to contact me at home. And when a new student is feeling overwhelmed, my phone line can be a lifeline.

Parents appreciate my accessibility and willingness to offer homework assistance, and their appreciation spills over into goodwill and support for our little school.

One mother of kids with learning disabilities told me that her boys never would have made it through seventh grade if they hadn't been able to call me.

The real reason her sons made it through seventh grade, I told her, was because, in spite of their disabilities, they took the initiative to pick up the phone and ask me for assistance or clarification on those days when I'd forgotten to modify their assignments.

I've just gone online at home, so Monday morning's assignment sheet will have a new feature: my home E-mail address. The next time Kate needs a writing extension, she can jot me an E-mail, and I'll zip back a response.

That's one more way I can let her know that I'm there and that I care. ✔

---

*A National Board certified teacher, Lynn Bonsey lives and teaches in Surry, Maine. When she's not chatting with her students, she can be reached at lbonsey@downeast.net.*



Not much has escaped the eyes of NEA member Eleanor Bralver in her over 40 years of teaching, but even though she's nearly 87, she still has her eyes fixed on the future, not the past.

Bralver may be the oldest NEA member still teaching. I spoke to her recently as we prepared this new millennium issue of *NEA Today*.

**Bill Fischer**
*editor*

"I never thought about reaching the next millennium," Bralver admits, "but now that I'm so close, I'm excited about it. I've lived history from cobblestone streets and horse-drawn wagons to space travel. I'd like to stick around long enough to see the full impact of computers."

Bralver has never actually owned a computer. She still writes in neat crisp handwriting on lined sheets of paper.

Bralver started back in 1935, as an elementary school teacher in Detroit. After a 20-year hiatus from teaching, she returned to the classroom, but this time in California's San Fernando Valley, where's she's been a fixture in the health department of Sylmar High for the past 30 years.

"I've watched the complexion of my school change dramatically, both academically and ethnically," says Bralver. "Condominiums have swallowed up most of the orange groves and horse ranches."

"Many neighborhoods have deteriorated and the area is now economically depressed," she notes. "There are gang pockets, and the gangs make sure we acknowledge their presence by plastering graffiti on as many open surfaces as they can."

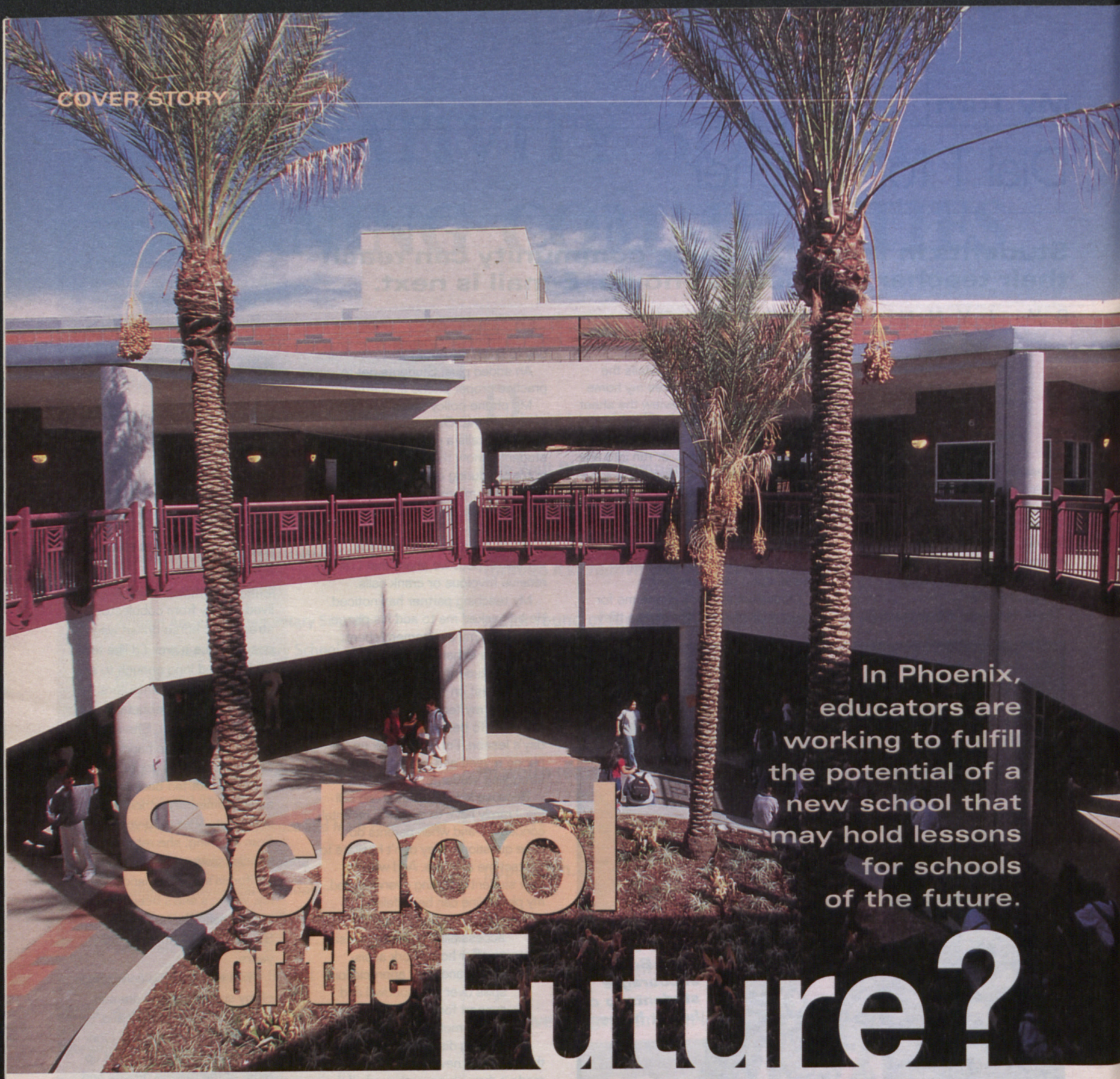
Still, Bralver's spirit seems to win the day—every day.

"When I get up at 5, I'm ready for the school day," she says. "I relish the opportunity to teach."

Is it harder to teach today than back in the 1930s?

"I think it's more difficult to teach today," answers Bralver, "but my passion for teaching is so strong that I don't think in terms of easy or hard."

Bill Fischer



# School of the Future?

**In Phoenix, educators are working to fulfill the potential of a new school that may hold lessons for schools of the future.**

The Phoenix Union High School District hadn't built a new school in 27 years. So when the district set out to build the Cesar Chavez High School in Laveen, 20 minutes outside Phoenix, it pulled out all the stops.

The new school's architecture reflects that ambition. Eye-popping colors, inspired by Aztec culture, abound on the sprawling campus, from the purple ramadas where students hang out at lunch to a bright red football stadium.

Amenities are everywhere, so many that one parent has dubbed Cesar Chavez the "Disneyland of high schools."

But the facilities aren't the only thing that's attracting attention to Chavez High. At the dawn of the new millennium, plenty of people are watching to see if the approach to education offered at Chavez a mix of collaborative decision making, state-of-the-art technology, and integrated curriculum—can be a model for the school of the future.

The goal at Chavez High, say the advocates for the new way, is to boost student achievement. If the school works, note school staff proudly, that success will be the ultimate tribute to the spirit of Cesar Chavez, the historic union leader who devoted his life to improving the lives of farm workers, including many who live nearby.

## A NEW 'COMPACT'

Almost two years ago, a team from the NEA local affiliates that represent teachers and support staff—the Phoenix Union ClassroomTeachers Association and the Classified Educators Association—joined with local administrators to set the stage for the Cesar Chavez new approach. The team replaced the old handbooks with an eight-page "compact" for collaboration.

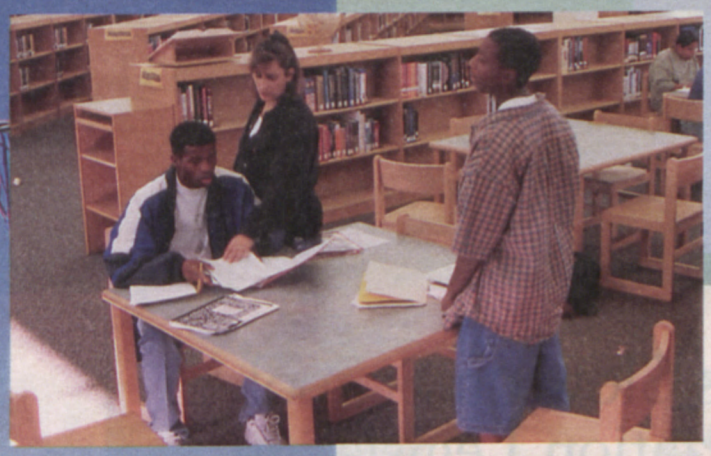
The compact's premise is simple. Give everybody on campus—from janitors to principals—an opportunity to make decisions about the school.

Why break with tradition? The old model wasn't working, team members felt, and parents were fed up with low test scores and high dropout rates.

Adds the Arizona Education Association's Doug Kilgore: "We had to do something dramatic. Parents were losing faith in the public system."

Five months into their first year in the new school, the Chavez staff is bursting with new ideas. But the road to consensus building hasn't been easy.

It's difficult to move to collaboration from confrontation, acknowledge the



**The library at Cesar Chavez High boasts plenty of book space and room for students to work on their assignments and exchange ideas. First-year teacher Jennifer Ward, pictured below, works in the school's state-of-the-art music room. Photo at left shows the school's expansive courtyard.**

Photos by Don Stevenson

## DECISION MAKING

At Chavez High, a veritable alphabet soup of councils and committees run the school, with the goal of breaking down barriers between teachers, support staff, and administrators.

Disputes are handled, under the compact, through a four-step conflict resolution process, rather than a traditional grievance procedure.

The top body in the process is the Educational Action Council. The three members of this panel—teacher Gary Raether, support staffer Dena Pollock, and principal Jim McElroy—are the school's decision makers of last resort.

Staffers like registrar Deitra Webb feel empowered by the new collaborative approach. At her old school, administrators would tell her how school registration would be run. At Chavez, the staff decided.

"We decided to let students register before school opened and teachers helped out," Webb points out.

Chavez High is emphasizing the importance of involving all staff in decisions, teachers and support staff alike.

"At one recent meeting," notes history teacher Jennifer Earl, "we were getting ready to discuss an issue and support staffers were walking out because they thought the meeting was just for teachers. Usually, support staff is just dismissed. Here, everyone has a voice."

## CURRICULUM

The spacious Chavez High campus is built around a "house" concept that's designed to encourage team teaching.

Traditional high schools are centered around departments, but, at Chavez, the "house" is the central focus. The faculty in each house cross the lines of academic disciplines. Science teachers spend their days working closely with English, French, and social studies teachers.

Eventually, the school will be structured totally around "coring," a process that will place one group of teachers with a single group of students. This coring, teachers believe, will help integrate course work and keep students from falling through cracks.

That commitment to reaching all students also shows up in the Chavez High commitment to areas like art and music. The school includes, among other features, a piano room with new electronic keyboards and an impressive performing arts auditorium.

"Most schools focus on the top achievers or the students on the bottom and forget the students in the middle," says Dena Pollock, the school bookstore staffer. "We forget that sometimes it may be music that keeps students coming back to school."

Technology is also important at Chavez High. The school's cyber age showpiece is the library, with over 90 computers, each available to help students do research. Every classroom, in addition, has at least one computer.

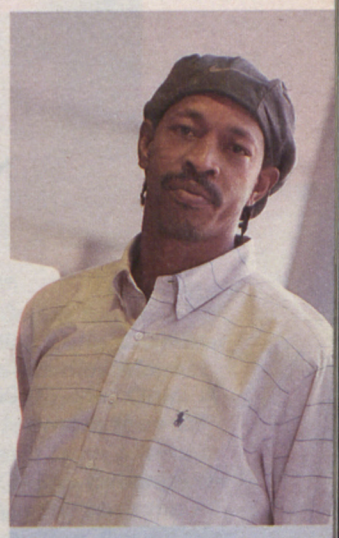
Chavez High is equally committed to giving teachers adequate access to high-tech tools.

Each building on the high school's campus boasts a teacher-conference center, where teachers have their own individual desks and access to computers, phones, and copying machines.

Math teacher Sheryl Filliater is one of the Chavez High staffers who are excited about the school's potential. As she walks across the campus, she points to quotes from Cesar Chavez chiseled into the school.

"Si Se Puede," she reads. "Yes, you can do it. In the end, I know we will succeed." ✔

*—Michele N-K Collison*



**Operational manager Dean C. Walker is part of the administrative team that helps Cesar Chavez High in Phoenix run smoothly.**

## LESSONS OF CHANGE

**Hindsight, of course, is 20/20. *NEA Today* asked the teachers, support staff, and administrators who helped plan Cesar Chavez High what they would do differently if they could start all over again. Their reflections might help the rest of us think about how best to develop new schools for the new millennium.**

- **If you're building a new school, don't hire the architect first. Decide on the school's curriculum, composition of the staff, and management philosophy. Then design the architecture.**
- **Plan *several* years in advance if you propose to open a new school and implement a shared governance plan. Eighteen months for planning is not enough to open a new school and implement a new management plan. As opening day approaches, everyone is more worried about ordering the furniture than about the mission of the school.**
- **Communicate your vision early and often. A mission statement does not mean much unless a school community develops a plan to accomplish it.**
- **Give staff the tools to help them work as a team. Most administrators, support staff, and teachers have not had much experience working together as team members. Don't expect them to start collaborating without training beforehand.**
- **Shared decision making is hard work. Staff have to put in a lot of extra hours to make shared decision making work. Be prepared to give team leaders release time or extra pay.**
- **Have some fun. Developing new ways of working is stressful, point out the members of the Chavez High planning team, and all work and no play makes planning team members cranky. They credit teacher Carla McManaway with planning Halloween parties and happy hours to encourage everybody to have fun.**

teachers, support staff, and administrators behind the compact. Some staffers fought the compact's adoption. They believe it will jeopardize the staff's hard-won gains.

Other staff are frustrated because some employees have been hired without being told about the special Chavez High mission. Others are disappointed that the planned "coring" curriculum isn't yet in place.

Still, plenty of Chavez High teachers and staff are committed for the long haul.

"To say it's been smooth sailing would be a lie," says Toni Kirby, president of the support staff local. "But this is the perfect site. It is equal to Cesar Chavez the man. We're trying to live up to his dream."

What's worth watching at Chavez High? Here's a quick list.

RESOURCES

## New Directions

*Taking charge of quality: How teachers and their unions can revitalize schools.* NEA Professional Library. To order, visit the NEA Professional Library at www.nea.org/books. Or call 800/229-4200.

*United Mind Workers: Unions and teaching in the knowledge society.* Charles T. Kerchner, Julia E. Koppich, and Joseph Weeres. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997. Argues that teachers need to seize the opportunity created by education reform by focusing on innovation and quality control.

*Forming the Future: Lessons from Saturn.* Jack O'Toole. Blackwell Publishers, 1996. $22.95. A United Auto Workers representative offers a history of the ideas that led to the creation of the innovative Saturn plant. The book defends the Saturn collaboration as a model for the future of labor-management relations.

*Negotiating the future: a labor perspective on American business.* Barry Bluestone and Irving Bluestone. Basic Books, 1994. The Bluestones propose a new Enterprise Compact that enables labor to become co-responsible for all management decisions.

## Congress Slow on School Modernization Legislation

Schools like Arizona's Cesar Chavez High School won't be duplicated in other states unless Congress frees up money for school modernization and construction.

In the 106th Congress, there were three major bills floating through House and Senate chambers, each directed toward additional school building construction. The efforts were directed at providing federal tax credits to pay the interest on school modernization bonds.

Representative Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) and 203 cosponsors—including three Republicans—introduced the Public School Modernization Act (H.R. 1660). The bill would provide almost $25 billion over two years for zero-interest school modernization bonds.

Representative Nancy Johnson (R-CT) and 51 Congressmen—including 30 Republicans—introduced the America's Better Classrooms Act (H.R. 1760) which would also provide $25 billion over two years for zero-interest school modernization bonds.

And in the Senate, Senator Charles Robb (D-VA) and 22 Democratic cosponsors introduced the Public School Modernization and Overcrowding Relief (MORE) Act (S. 1454).

Unfortunately, none of the bills got anywhere. Congress did, however, extend the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program for another two years. QZAB allocates $400 million in zero-interest bonds specifically for renovations, repairs, and remodeling at low-income schools. The money cannot be used to construct new buildings and has other strings attached, but it helps. Still, as time passes and schools deteriorate, the cost of repairs will keep increasing. The General Accounting Office estimates that school repairs will cost $112 billion, in addition to the $73 billion needed to build new schools in order to meet the surging student enrollment levels.

"If students are to have modern schools in the next century, Congress has to act next year," says NEA GR staffer Joel Packer. He urges NEA members to contact their Representatives and Senators. In addition, get your school board, state legislators, mayors, and other elected officials to push for federal help in building modern schools for the next century. ✔

Q&A

## This School Educates To a Different Drummer

Mike Olson is the president of the Phoenix Union Classroom Teachers Association. He spoke recently with *NEA Today* on what lessons NEA members can learn from his district's new and innovative Cesar Chavez High as they help plan schools for the next millennium.

**Why did your NEA local agree to a collaborative management structure at Cesar Chavez?**

Five years ago we had a job action. We were picketing. And the community gave us a real spanking. And the administrators got a spanking, too. "Knock it off," the public told us, "take care of our kids!"

We're really facing tremendous pressure to improve the quality of public schools in this country. And if we're not involved in improving that quality, then parents are going to look elsewhere. So we said we would try this. This is ground nobody has tread on before.

**Why do some of your members feel threatened by this collaboration?**

They perceive collaboration as a sign of weakness. When you work as a team, everybody has to take responsibility for the decision. It's not clear-cut. You can't point to something and say, "We got that." In collaboration, you have to include your partners and say, "We got this together." This is strength through partnership.

**How do you resolve conflict under the Chavez compact?**

We don't try to avoid conflict because conflict will exist. The idea is to problem solve. Under the Chavez compact, we want to give people the tools to solve their problems on their own campus.

**Could Chavez be a model for the school of the future?**

Don Stevenson

***Phoenix Association President Mike Olson says collaborative decision making works if everyone takes responsibility for the decision.***

If this could work, teachers would be empowered. Classified workers would be empowered. The lines would be blurred between classified and certified. "When I go to work," our members would be able to say, "I get to make decisions about kids."

But this won't mean anything if student achievement doesn't improve. We're not doing this so employees can have a better day at work.

If teachers and support staff are empowered, I believe the result will be higher student achievement. ✔

# Will Public Education Survive the Next Century?

**DR. BARBARA SMITH PALMER** *is an elected member of the United Teachers of Los Angeles House of Representatives and Political Action Committee, the California Teachers Association State Council, and a UTLA delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.*

## yes

I'm excited about the prospects for teaching and learning in the 21st Century. But for public education to truly survive in the 21st Century, we will need to make some adjustments in our efforts at reform, in our philosophy, and in our teaching.

• **Reform.** How schools are structured has complicated our attempts at innovation. The relationship between knowledge and power, within the social and political contexts of our schools, has placed burdensome external controls on teachers and students, controls ranging from excessive regulation to massive testing.

Current policies that focus on national testing and national standards are too narrow. There is no one approach that can work for all kids. Our testing and standards policies must take into account the many diverse learning styles in our student population.

• **Learning Approaches.** Our presuppositions commonly prevent us from thinking effectively about educational issues—and from committing ourselves to equity and excellence for all. We must put an end to deficit terminology and labeling. Terms like "at-risk" marginalize kids into categories and make assumptions about their learning capabilities that aren't true. Children are capable of much more than teachers and parents generally realize.

• **Teaching.** In the school of the 21st Century, teachers will have to challenge traditional approaches to teaching and learning by modeling a collaborative form of practitioner inquiry.

Teachers need to encourage students to question answers and to express their own viewpoints. They have to provide ways for students to participate in the discourse that shapes their lives. Curiosity, industry, and imagination should be encouraged and rewarded.

Teachers need more autonomy and the ability to create exciting educational experiences for students. By encouraging democratic dialogue among educators, we can empower teachers.

We can excel in the new century if teachers function as a community of scholars, engaging in collaborative diagnostic and problem-solving work to create alternative approaches for designing tasks and assessing activities.

In the classroom of the 21st Century, teachers need to involve students in interesting project-based assignments so that they can learn by doing.

Students should become more engaged readers. Activities like peer-assisted reading, classroom discussions about texts, and book club projects can allow students to become leaders on their own terms.

Students will reach their personal goals through the gentle guidance of teachers, who hold themselves and their students accountable to high standards for all.

Educators joining with each other and with their students to explore a critical pedagogy of group work, collaboration, and serious individualized attention, will create a revolutionary classroom where all children learn at the highest levels.

If that happens, public education will not only survive through the 21st Century, it will thrive! ✔

**CYNTHIA RUSS** *is a curriculum coach for Residence Park Latin Grammar Classical Studies Magnet School in Dayton, Ohio. A teacher for more than 26 years, Russ is an alternate member of the Resolutions Committee for both the Ohio Education Association and NEA.*

## no

As I look ahead to the next century and think about the fate of our public education system, I feel discouraged. I do not think public education will, in fact, survive the next century.

Public schools, to be sure, have always faced challenges. As public educators, we've always had to battle to make sure all children have the rights and opportunities they deserve. We had to fight to end segregation, fight for equity for Native American children schooled on reservations, and fight to get adequate funding for inner city schools.

But the opponents we face now seem tougher than ever, and we find ourselves battling on so many different fronts.

• **Vouchers.** The increasing clamor for private-school tuition vouchers is a direct threat to public education's survival in the next century.

Vouchers siphon off much needed funding from public schools. In a voucher-friendly America, those who remain in an underfunded public system will face a vicious downward spiral of deteriorating buildings, out-of-date materials, overcrowded classrooms, and uncertified teachers. This downward spiral will only create pressure for more vouchers.

• **Charter Schools.** Charters today are too often run by businesses out to make a buck, not educators with visions they want to try to realize. The results are predictable. Children become mere moneymakers for the companies involved. But what happens when the money runs out?

If charters continue, with little public oversight, we won't have much in our education budgets left in the next century for children to receive the education they deserve.

• **Lack of Parental Involvement.** The absence of parents in our schools is another factor that leads me to believe that public education may not survive.

Parental support has always been the backbone for public education. With dwindling parental support, lines of communication tend to close. Schools are then left subject to gossip, innuendo, misconceptions, and bad feelings.

Schools that do not have a strong communication link with parents will not survive. We cannot survive in the next century if parents and the community do not understand what is really happening in our schools today.

If public education is to survive into the next century, we need to rebuild general public support. We must not let vouchers and other schemes take away the resources we need to help our public schools thrive.

There are problems, of course, in our public school system. But American public education —available to everyone, without regard to race, color, creed, economic status, or physical and mental ability—remains our nation's greatest contribution to democracy.

Society needs to understand that our children are our future. If we continue diluting public education, we will no longer have a viable method to educate all children. And without a focus on all children, public education will cease to exist. ✔

## What's Your Opinion?

**Will public education survive the next century?** To vote, visit our Web site at www.nea.org/neatoday and see the results instantly.

**Are charter schools eroding support for public education?** The tally on this Debate question from the last issue of *NEA Today:*
**45% Yes** **55% No**

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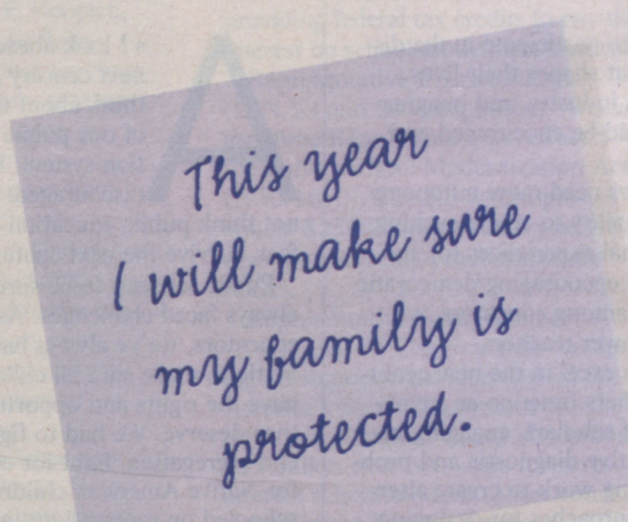


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| Member and Each Eligible Child | $19 | $20,000<br>$10,000 | $100,000<br>$ 30,000 |
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†Or domestic partner.

*National Safety Council Accidents Facts, U.S. population 1997
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Note: Your estate will be named if no beneficiary is designated. If enrolling dependents, the member will be the beneficiary.

## About your spouse/domestic partner

Name | Date of Birth / / | Social Security No. - -

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Account Number | Expires**

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I certify by signing this Acceptance Form that I am a member in good standing of the National Education Association.

**Please complete, sign and return this Acceptance Form to: NEA AD&D Insurance Program, The Prudential Insurance Company of America, P.O. Box 5085, Millville, NJ 08332-9922.**

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**Signature of Member** (you must sign here to initiate coverage) Date

*Please refer to the rate chart to the left, as well as your Acceptance Form for more details.

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# On the Issues: Gore Measures Up

**Al Gore has proven his leadership on issues around children and public education. That's why NEA is recommending him in this year's primaries.**

It's hard to shock Vice President Al Gore with tales of decrepit, outdated schools. Tell him about one and he'll tell you about 20 he has seen for himself, like the school in Orange County, California, where crowding was so severe that, he says, "they took an oversized janitors' closet and converted it into a classroom."

Or the ancient rope-and-pulley used to transport supplies to Central High's sixth floor in Davenport, Iowa.

"This is a sign we need to get busy," Gore told educators at Central in 1998. "We ought to make it a national priority to build new schools."

It says a lot about Al Gore that he was stressing the need to modernize schools—and reduce class size and improve technology—well before he became a Presidential candidate.

"The vice president has a passion for issues that aren't even on the radar screen of most politicians," NEA President Bob Chase noted this fall, "issues like classroom technology, teacher quality, and professional development."

In October, speaking first before the governing council of NEA's political action committee, the Fund for Children and Public Education, and then before the 175-member Board of Directors, Chase urged support for a motion to recommend Gore in the 2000 presidential primaries and caucuses.

Both bodies approved Chase's motion by overwhelming margins. Neither felt that the Association could delay action.

"The Iowa Caucus is on January 24," Jolene Franken, the president of NEA's state affiliate in Iowa, told the PAC Council. "NEA would be a non-player if we delayed our recommendation. We need lead time to lay campaign groundwork, and other states have primaries coming soon!"

That's a fact. The 2000 primaries and caucuses will start

**Well before the Presidential race began, Al Gore was visiting schools to talk about the need for modernization, smaller classes, and improved technology.**

AP Photo/Jason Wise

# On the Issues: NEA Peels Off the Party Labels

***NEA's Georgia affiliate helps a lone Republican lawmaker pass an anti-bullying law.***

When a 15-year-old student died from a bully's beating at a bus stop in Cherokee County, Georgia, state Representative Chuck Scheid knew it was time for a law against bullying.

But Scheid faced one huge obstacle: He was a Republican in a state legislature controlled by Democrats, after a bitter election cycle. In this polarized environment, no "GOP" bill stood a chance of passage.

But Scheid, after carefully researching and crafting a bullying bill, found an ally in the Georgia Association of Educators/NEA, which doesn't play politics when it comes to child safety.

In the 1999 legislative session, GAE lobbyists went to bat for Scheid's bullying bill, eventually persuading majority party lawmakers to merge it into a larger Democratic bill amending Georgia's existing school safety law.

After the larger bill passed—unanimously—Scheid publicly thanked General Assembly members and stressed that his measure never would have seen the light of day without the help of the majority and minority leaders, the House education committee chair, and, yes, GAE.

GAE lobbyists "went before committees and carried the weight for my legislation, to find support for it," Scheid later told *NEA Today*.

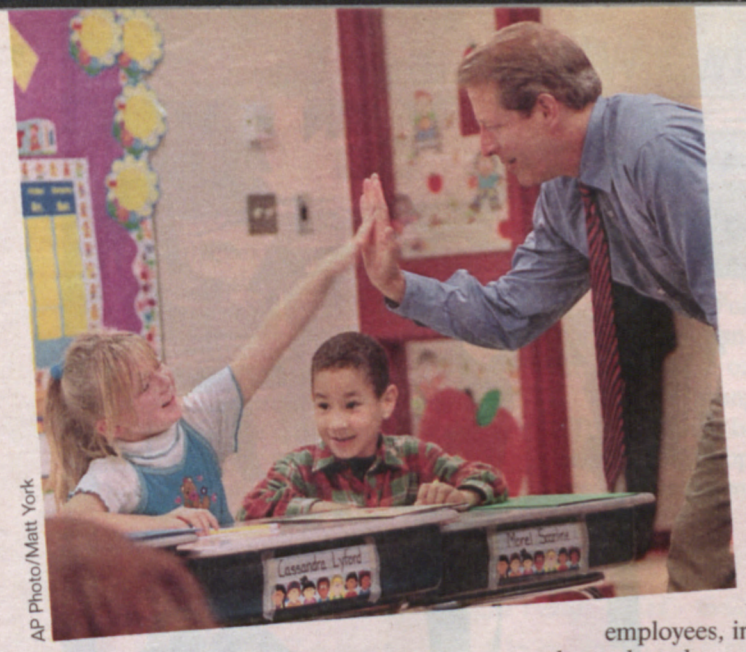
Thanks to this cooperative, bipartisan effort, Georgia now has a crisply written school code that:

- Clearly defines bullying.
- Requires each school board to adopt a policy prohibiting student-to-student bullying in grades 6-12 and to "require such prohibition to be included in the student code of conduct for middle and high schools."
- Mandates that any student found bullying for the third time in a year be assigned to an alternative school.
- Requires each school board to notify parents and students about the new penalties against bullying.
- Pulls state funding from any district not in compliance with the new standards.

> This bipartisan legislation ensures that bullies are found and treated early.

Scheid, who is now collaborating with GAE to introduce a "Bully B'Ware" program to all Georgia districts, stresses that his legislation "enables educators to explain it to people, and identify kids who may be bullies." ✔

For more on Georgia's new anti-bullying law, contact state Representative Chuck Scheid at 404/656-0137.



AP Photo/Matt York

earlier than ever before, and presidential nominees could be selected by the third week in March.

Before NEA can support Gore in any state primary or caucus, the NEA affiliate in that state must concur with NEA's recommendation.

Here's what state affiliate leaders are hearing about the Gore recommendation:

• **Al Gore was selected through a thoroughly fair process.** NEA invited all announced presidential contenders to be considered for a recommendation. Those who completed an issues questionnaire were invited to participate in a videotaped interview with President Chase.

Only Gore and Democrat Bill Bradley completed both steps. GOP candidate John McCain filled out a questionnaire and scheduled an interview, but Senate business prevented him from attending.

After a close review of candidate responses and records, Chase decided to recommend Vice President Gore.

• **Vice President Gore speaks most forcefully on issues that matter to NEA members.** That list includes everything from classroom technology to Head Start and Title I funding.

"Gore has pledged he would not make Social Security mandatory in the 13 states where public employees, including our members, have elected to remain outside the system," Chase said in his speech, "and he has, in every instance, voted against voucher pilots and experiments."

• **Gore has been a leader on one education issue after another.** "It was Gore who pioneered the E-rate, who took the heat for it, and who fought for it in the trenches," Chase noted, "and it is Gore who has helped shape Administration policy on school modernization."

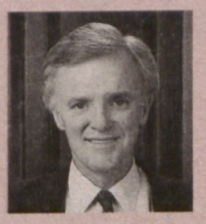
'Others claim to see stiffness in Al Gore—I see spine. And time and again I have seen leadership.'
—NEA President Bob Chase

• **This winter's nomination battle is our Association's chance to shape the campaign debate around education.** The Gore recommendation—which only applies to the primaries and caucuses—will help inject the perspectives of 2.5 million NEA members into Campaign 2000. ✔

**For candidate responses to NEA's issues questionnaire, send an E-mail to candidatesrespond@list.nea.org. To read NEA President Chase's speech recommending Al Gore's candidacy, E-mail NEAonGore@list.nea.org.**

## Heroes & Zeroes

▲ In today's abrasive political climate, it's a true hero who advocates for children and public education and opposes vouchers. That's why these "heroes" have made it to NEA's list of recommended candidates in state races:



• Nebraska U.S. Senator Bob Kerry, who seeks re-election. He has a 100 percent NEA voting record and always remains accessible to Nebraska NEA members.

• Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan, who's running for the U.S. Senate. This strong supporter of public schools has fully funded his state's educational formula and backed collective bargaining rights for Missouri public employees.

• Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction Nancy Keenan, who seeks election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Keenan opposes vouchers and has helped reverse the state's decade-long trend of inadequate school funding.

• Former congressman and shuttle astronaut Bill Nelson, who's running for the U.S. Senate in Florida. Nelson, a member of the Florida Board of Education, strongly supports quality public schools and is strongly opposed to vouchers—in the state with the first statewide voucher law.

▼ He has labeled Washington State Governor Gary Locke as a "Borg drone" and now fast food baron Jim Spady is speaking out on kids and public schools. Spady belongs to the nine-member A-Plus Commission, which oversees Washington's new school accountability goals and standards—and only includes one teacher. *Star Trek* fan Spady, a backer of unregulated charter schools, calls for resistance to "Governor Borg" and the educational "Collective." Stay tuned.

## Al Gore Speaks Out On...

AP Photo/Matt York

**Vouchers:**
**"My administration will oppose vouchers and voucher-like programs with every ounce of strength I have."**

**Professional development:**
"We need to have significantly more funding for professional development opportunities, including the chance for teachers to visit the classrooms of excellent teachers."

**School size:**
**"We need to listen to teachers and develop classrooms that are small enough, so that discipline can be enforced and so that learning can take place to the maximum degree."**

**School safety:**
"We need more guidance counselors for children who are in trouble, a policy of zero tolerance, especially for guns, and more involvement by parents in supporting teachers."

**Technology:**
**"As president, I will lead the charge to modernize our facilities, hook up classrooms to the Internet, and provide training for the teachers."**

**Education funding:**
"The right idea is to invest in our public schools, empower teachers, and provide more professional development, smaller class sizes, and more opportunities to integrate new ideas that we know work."

## News Tips On New Schools?

**How are you and your NEA local affiliate putting the need to modernize public schools front and center in public and political debate? What successes have you had? *NEA Today* would like to know. Send your tip to neatnews@list.nea.org or fax 202/822-7206.**

## How America Knows What America Needs

Jacob Lawrence, *The Library*, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., © Smithsonian Institution

# If You're Not Counted, You Just Don't *Count*

**NEA is committed to an accurate Census count this year. At stake: funding for kids and schools and a political voice for all citizens.**

**IN THEIR OWN WORDS**

**"Our congressional delegations are apportioned on the basis of Census figures. And dollars for schools and children are allotted by the number of people in each district and state.**

**"If we work this next year to make sure that everyone in this country is counted, especially our children, it will pay off for the next 10 years, guaranteed."**

—NEA Director Leonard Paolillo, at the 1999 Representative Assembly

California NEA member David Hernandez teaches second grade in San Jose's Alum Rock district, a heavily Hispanic, low-wealth community where federal funding makes a critical difference—be it for Title I reading and math instruction, school breakfast and lunch, Head Start, or state grants for child welfare services.

But U.S. population statistics, on which feds rely to channel program dollars to Alum Rock, just aren't accurate. Those stats, compiled during the 1990 federal Census, omit many of the people Hernandez sees with his own eyes each day: ethnic minorities, the urban poor, and children.

Nationally, Census takers missed 5.3 percent of Hispanics, 4.3 percent of African-Americans, and 12.2 percent of Native Americans on reservations.

The total 1990 Census undercount was an estimated 8.4 million, 52 percent of whom were children.

In San Jose alone, says the Children's Defense Fund, the 1990 Census missed 7,835 kids, who could have required 12 new schools and 326 teachers.

Hernandez knows that Census numbers don't just impact his class size. They determine allocation of $185 billion in federal funding a year to states and communities, plus apportionment of 435 congressional seats to states.

And as America's baseline statistics, the Census numbers drive social and business policy—in everything from enforcement of civil rights laws to the siting of new schools, highways, health and day care facilities, and shopping centers.

"We need our communities to focus on an accurate Census in 2000," stresses Hernandez. "It'll affect our education funding, political clout, and buying

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**HUMAN RIGHTS:** The United States and Somalia remain the only nations that have not adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The 10-year-old Convention sets minimum standards for protecting children's rights. For more: ww.unicef.org/crc/.

**ENGINEERING:** What's keeping more minority students from becoming engineers? The key to improving minority graduation rates in engineering, says a new study, may be increasing financial aid for students. For more: www.nacme.org/new.html.

**NUTRITION:** Over the last decade, the number of kids served school breakfasts has almost doubled, to 6.2 million. Last year, over 70,000 schools participated in the School Breakfast Program. For more: www.frac.org/html/news/breakfastscorecard99.html.

**PRIORITIES:** The United States, notes Reagan Administration Assistant Secretary of Defense Lawrence Korb, has spent over $2 trillion on national security since the end of the Cold War. For more: www.businessleaders.org/blsp/home_flash_yes.htm.

power for the next decade.

"Moreover, ethnic minority groups are growing in numbers and need to be counted," adds Hernandez, who is chair of the NEA Hispanic Caucus. "We want to ensure that we, and all ethnic groups, are represented appropriately in Census 2000 statistics."

That's now official NEA policy.

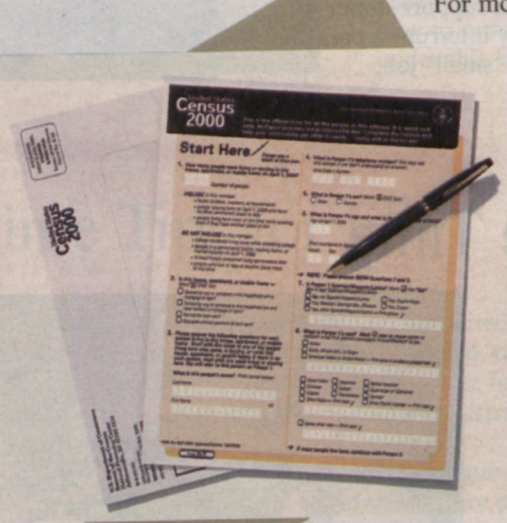
**"Whether it's building schools or distributing money for school lunch or Head Start, if the government doesn't know where the children are, it can't provide the right amount of aid."**

—The Associated Press

At NEA's 1999 Representative Assembly, Hernandez won the support of 9,200 delegates for the Hispanic Caucus's proposal to "involve our grassroots NEA membership in a fair and accurate Census count, especially in ethnic minority communities and among language minority groups."

The RA body also voted to urge NEA state and local affiliates to forge "partnership agreements" with the U.S. Census Bureau.

A national NEA/Bureau partnership agreement, already in place, encourages "affiliate and member participation in Census 2000 activities." Here's what you can do:




**1) Encourage people in your community to fill out the seven-question census form.** Be mindful that fear—of immigration laws, for example—keeps many from cooperating, even though the Census process is confidential.

"Reach out to ethnic and minority communities through local associations and churches," Hernandez advises. "Target individuals and agencies who are recognized and have credibility, people who are listened to. Tell them about the undercount in the last Census and its negative effect."

"Meet people where they are and just show them the Census form," adds Tracey-Ann M. Nelson, Georgia's director of Census Policy. "Tell them it asks for less info than an application for a driver's license or a loan.

"And tap young people," she adds. "They have the best ideas for reaching other young people, who then can reach their parents."

For more ideas, go to www.census.gov/dmd/www/partner.htm.

**2) Participate in the Census Bureau's Census in the Schools program.** Through the Bureau's free teaching materials, kids can learn the importance of the Census—and share that with parents.

"My NEA local affiliate will encourage teachers to use this curriculum, in cooperation with the PTA," says Hernandez.

For more on the Census in the Schools Program, go to p. 48.

**3) Apply for a full- or part-time job with the Census Bureau.** The Bureau will hire 860,000 people, for $8 to $20 an hour, for tasks like verifying addresses and visiting homes to get Census forms completed.

Bureau managers recognize the role teachers and support staff play.

"We'd love to hire some educators," says Deputy Commerce Secretary Robert Mallett. "They know the communities, they're highly literate, and they get out of work at a time when they'd be most useful." ✔

**For more information, go to the Census Web site at www.census.gov. For information about applying for Census jobs, call 1/888-325-7733.**

## Facts & Figures

**The 1990 Census Undercount**
*Three Cities, Three Lost Opportunities*

- San Antonio, Texas: 16,679 kids not counted. The price: 29 schools staffed by 1,042 teachers.
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin: 8,650 kids not counted. The price: 21 schools staffed by 541 teachers.
- Portland, Oregon: 3,147 kids not counted. The price: 7 schools staffed by 161 teachers.

*Source: Children's Defense Fund*

## THE 15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

- **The Goal:** An accurate count in Census 2000.
- **Your Assignments:**
  - Mail away for the Census Bureau's Census in the Schools curriculum (for details, see page 48).
  - Invite a regional Census Bureau representative to speak to your school stakeholders.
  - Display Census materials everywhere.
  - Get your NEA local affiliate, church, or community group to publicly endorse Census 2000 and distribute Census information.
  - Identify hard-to-enumerate areas in your community and plan ways to help Census takers complete an accurate count.
- **Here's how to get started:** Go to www.census.gov and download any one of 21 Census fact sheets. ✔

## YOUR DUES DID IT

**Engaging Parents:** From mid-January to mid-February, NEA will run a cable TV ad campaign focusing on the parent-student-teacher relationship. The goal: re-engage parents in their children's education. To put "legs" on this campaign, the ads will direct viewers to the NEA Web site for more information.

**Hot, Wired ESP:** Interested in seeing which NEA local affiliates received 1999-2000 ESP Technology Grants? The list of recipients, along with brief descriptions of their projects, is found at www.nea.org/esp/espnea/techgrnt.htm#9899. ✔

**PRODUCTIVITY:** American workers now produce 12 percent more in an hour's time than they did in 1989. But, notes economist John Schmitt, worker wages, after adjusting for inflation, are up only 1.9 percent. For more: www.epinet.org.

**MEDICINE:** Finding it harder to help elderly parents meet their health needs? One reason: The prices of the 50 drugs most frequently used by the elderly are rising at more than four times the rate of inflation. For more: www.familiesusa.org/drugs.htm.

**TELEPHONES:** Over 6 million American households, or 5.9 percent of all Americans, currently do not have telephone service. The principal reason, notes the Center for Media Education and the Center for Policy Alternatives, is cost. For more: www.cme.org.

**VOUCHERS:** In November, People For the American Way and Wisconsin community leaders urged state lawmakers to pass legislation that would make private schools that get tax dollars more accountable to parents and taxpayers. For more: www.pfaw.org.

# All Work, No Pay . . .

## Most ESP are covered by federal overtime rules. That means a hefty tab for a 'working' lunch.

Charles Woodfork, a custodian in Webster Parish, Louisiana, did a little math when his elementary school principal directed him to stay on grounds for two hours between his morning and afternoon shifts, each four hours in length, and only compensated him for the extra hours with free lunch and breakfast.

Over a three-year span, Woodfork repeatedly pointed out to his principal that the district, by expecting him to wait on campus between his shifts, was asking him to work 10 hours a day at eight hours pay. The principal would only respond by altering Woodfork's timesheet starting and quitting times, making it appear that he was not working the daily 10 hours.

"I felt used," recalls Woodfork, a member of the Webster Association of Educators. "I finally got tired and took my case to the Association."

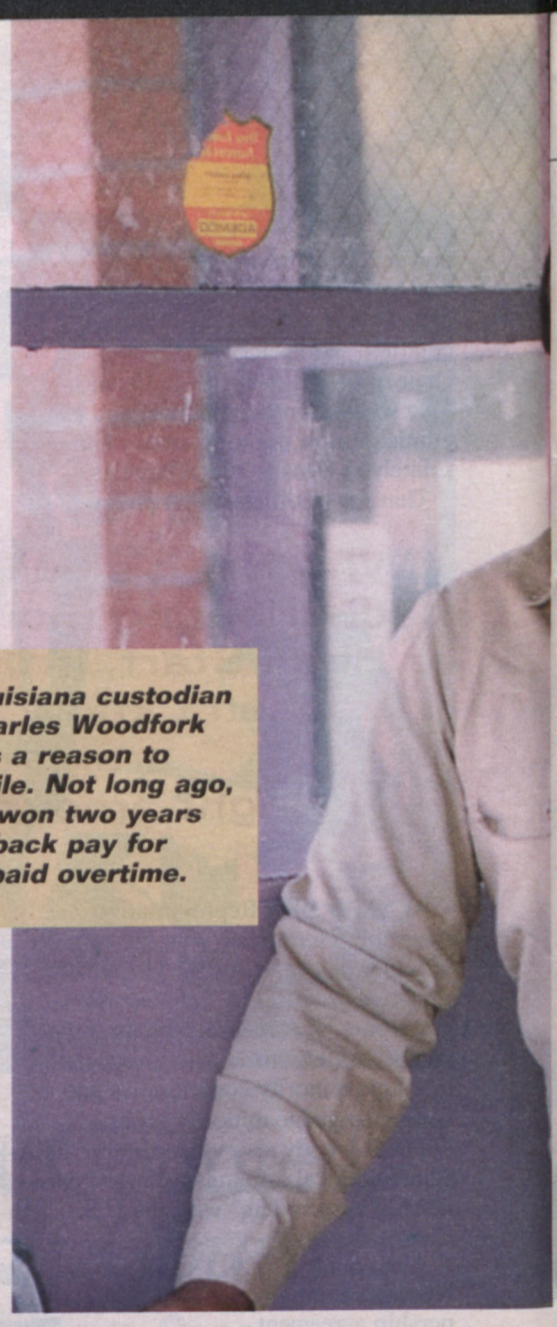
In late 1998, Woodfork filed a grievance for the overtime pay due him and, accompanied by a local UniServ director, went to a hearing with the local superintendent. The result? Woodfork won $1,500, the equivalent of two years of back pay at time-and-a-half, minus meals.

The superintendent had little choice. Woodfork had both the evidence—the altered schedules and grease-spattered sign-in sheets—and the law on his side. Webster Parish had violated the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, the law that extends minimum wage and overtime compensation guarantees to most non-certified public school employees.

Had Woodfork been free to leave the building in between his custodial shifts, he would, under FLSA guidelines, have been "waiting to be engaged." That time isn't compensable under the law.

But confined to school, he was "engaged to wait," entitling him to compensation.

Unfortunately, administrators and teachers, who are exempted from federal overtime rules, don't always realize they're creating a compensable situation when they engage a support staffer to wait. Or when they interrupt a paraeducator's lunch for a "small" job.



***Louisiana custodian Charles Woodfork has a reason to smile. Not long ago, he won two years of back pay for unpaid overtime.***

**KUDOS TO. . .**

# Driving It Home on Drive Time

■ On 23 radio stations this past autumn—from El Centro to the Oregon border—listeners heard morning drive time radio spots produced by the **California Teachers Association.**

Introduced by classroom teachers and anchored by CTA President Wayne Johnson, the ads highlighted recent increases in student achievement scores, while focusing on unsolved problems in public education—including unwired schools, crowded classes, teacher shortages, overflowing universities, and the need to relate testing to what's being taught.

More radio spots, which have been researched through CTA interviews with hundreds of teachers, will be broadcast this spring. You can download sample ads at www.cta.org.

■ In this day and age, you don't offer a 5 percent increase to certified staff while holding out a paltry 1.1 percent raise to support staff. At least not in Tucson, Arizona, where **members of the Amphitheater Education Association**—600 certified staffers and 150 ESP—fought such a divisive offer through community outreach, sickouts, and rolling strikes.

The payoff: a contract settlement with a 5 percent increase for all employees, plus a no-contracting pledge.

■ In New Jersey, the **Atlantic City Education Association** has won an administrative law judge's order for reinstatement of three laid-off custodial employees—with back pay and benefits—and compensation for nine others, former head custodians who were demoted to the custodian position in 1998.

The school board will have to pay out approximately $250,000 in back wages and benefits. ✔

Mike Myslinski

***Inglewood teacher Ayesha Lindsey, left, introduces a California Teachers Association radio spot.***

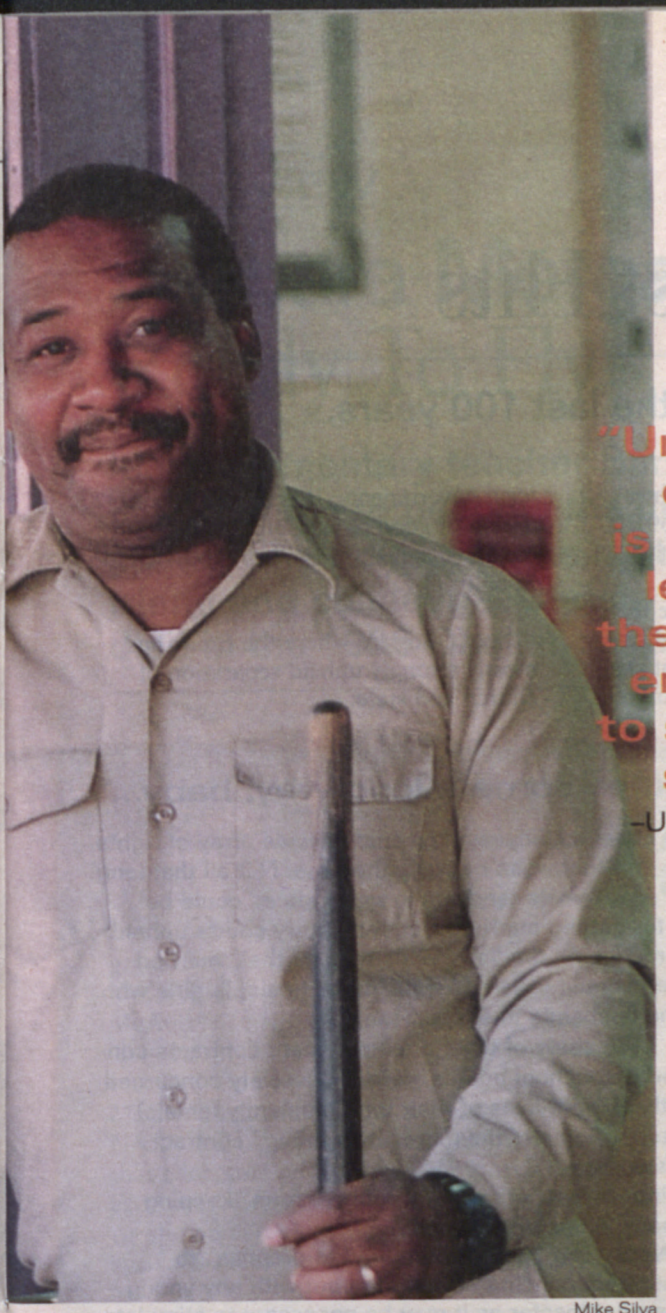
## THE BOTTOM LINE

**PRISONS:** The United States now has 1.7 million people behind bars—more than any other industrial nation. More Americans work for prisons than for any Fortune 500 company besides General Motors. For more: www.sentencingproject.org/brief/1035.htm.

**TELEVISION:** By 18, kids have spent more time in front of a TV than in the classroom. A typical child will annually view 8,000 murders and 20,000 commercials on TV. For more: www.connectforkids.org/benton_topics1544/benton_topics_show.htm?doc_id=18404.

**MANHOOD:** Three fourths of kids describe males on TV as violent, not surprising since 74 percent of the males seen on TV are performing antisocial behaviors. For more: www.connectforkids.org/benton_topics1544/benton_topics_show.htm?doc_id=18404.

**BEHAVIOR:** Watching violence on TV isn't good for kids, but watching violence in real life can be devastating, according to new research on elementary and middle school youngsters. For more: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/abstract/104/4/878.



Mike Silva

"The Fair Labor Standards Act was originally passed to protect the Depression-era unemployed," notes Arizona UniServ Director Jim Slingluff. "The aim was to make overtime prohibitively expensive and get employers to hire more people."

Times change, but FLSA overtime rules are still on the books—and enforced.

> "Unpaid overtime is a tax levied on the poorest employees to support schools."
> –UniServ Director Jim Slingluff

Want proof? In the early '90s, a U.S. Labor Department probe uncovered overtime violations in Arizona's Amphitheater school district, especially among ESP working alongside FLSA-exempt school administrators and staff.

To settle the violation, the school district had to shell out almost $1 million in back overtime pay.

Understandably, some of the best overtime advice for ESP comes from Arizona Education Association staffers who've been through the overtime wars. They advise support staff to:

■ **Educate teachers and other "exempt" employees about FLSA.** Support staff and teachers should "communicate with one another on how to provide the best services to kids under this law," says UniServ Director Jeff Thomas.

■ **Don't just rely on the feds.** The FLSA is just *one* vehicle for winning overtime compensation. It's also possible to protect overtime rights through state legislation—or by negotiating contract language that actually spells out federal overtime requirements or calls for premium pay beginning at less than 40 hours a week.

■ **Keep good records.** "If you work through a 'duty-free' lunch, document it," stresses Thomas. Your time sheets and testimony may prevail if a federal inspector suspects the accuracy of administrators' records, notes UniServ Director Jim Slingluff.

■ **Use discretion.** "Consider the impact of a huge back pay penalty on the school system budget," advises UniServ Director David Henderson. "Back pay awards can be structured so that employees get what they deserve *and* educational systems are spared."

■ **Fight systemic overtime abuse through the Association.** "If you know of strong evidence of substantial violations of the law, gather stories from ESP in representative positions, particularly those working in an 'exempt' environment," advises Slingluff. "If you do decide to go to the U.S. Department of Labor, get together with your UniServ rep, and go in a unified way." ✔

**For more information, contact your UniServ office or the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division.**

**BASICS FOR BEGINNERS**

# Five Overtime Tips for ESP

**1)** You must be compensated at the time-and-a-half rate for all time past 40 hours actually worked in a week. You may only use comp time in lieu of pay if you or your union have a negotiated, written agreement with the employer.

**2)** If you and your employer have a time-and-a-half comp time arrangement, you should be able to use your banked time "within a reasonable period after making the request." So long as your request does not "unduly disrupt" the operation, your employer may not arbitrarily deny your request for time off.

**3)** You may volunteer in school without overtime consequences by: performing services in your own child's classroom, participating in activities directly involved in your child's education, or performing services *other* than those for which you are employed by your district.

**4)** If you are required to work in two or more positions for the same employer, say custodian and security guard, your hours must be added together to determine if you are entitled to overtime.

**5)** Bona fide meal periods are not paid as worktime. But if interrupted by the employer, they are compensable. Say federal regs: "The employee must be completely removed from duty for the purposes of eating regular meals. . .The employee is not relieved if he is required to perform any duty, whether active or inactive, while eating." ✔

# Do'ers Profile

Joe Mahoney

**LIZ EVERETT**

■ ***Name:*** Liz Everett, computer resource teacher
■ ***NEA local affiliate:*** Chesapeake (Virginia) Education Association
■ ***Extracurricular activity:*** CEA and state Association board member
■ ***Current Project:*** At the start of the school year, with just 10-15 minutes of work a week, Everett helped put new teachers on track—and build the Association. Each week, Everett wired survival tips to the newbies on topics like classroom organization and student behavior, all very appreciated by the recipients.

Those interested in joining the Association were visited by Association reps, enrolled, and encouraged to sign up for *Works4Me*, NEA's weekly teaching tip E-mail newsletter.

Everett is now evaluating her approach's effectiveness as an Association organizing tool. *To contact Liz Everett, send an E-mail to Lizjazzcat@aol.com.*

**FATHERS:** About four in 10 American fathers help their kids with homework every day, and a quarter read to their children daily, reports a recent survey. About one in five fathers report never helping with homework. For more: www.fathers.com/newx.html.

**FIREARMS:** Three fourths of gun-owning parents believe their kids can distinguish a toy gun from a real gun. Some 52 percent of gun-owning parents store their firearms loaded or unlocked. For more: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/abstract/104/5/1059.

**ADOLESCENTS:** Children today reach puberty two to three years earlier than children in 1900, notes a new study. Early-maturing girls and late-maturing boys are the most likely to face social problems. For more:www.nap.edu/books/0309065828/html/.

**ALCOHOL:** Some 4.4 million young people under 21 are "binge drinkers," but 2.6 million teens don't know that a person can die from an alcohol overdose, reports Mothers Against Drunk Driving. For more: www.madd.org/under21/youth_myths.shtml.

RIGHTS WATCH

# The Supremes' Greatest Hits

## An assortment of High Court highlights from the last 100 years.

Until the late 1960s, public school employees had little or no job protection. Women could be fired for getting married, and most teachers were "at will" employees, who could be dismissed at any time for any reason.

But over the last 50 years, the U.S. Supreme Court has dramatically enhanced the employment rights of educators and changed the nature of public education.

Here, as the century turns, is a survey of the High Court's landmark education decisions:

**Due Process.** In Board of Regents v. Roth (1972), the Court first ruled that school employees with tenure or "continuing contract status" or who are fired for stigmatizing reasons have a right under the 14th Amendment to procedural due process.

This due process includes notice of the charges and a fair hearing before an unbiased party that includes the right to counsel, to present evidence, and to call and cross-examine witnesses.

**Freedom of Speech.** The Court declared in 1968 that school employees can't be punished for speaking out on matters of public concern. The case, Pickering v. Board of Education, established a basis for later rulings on the right to belong to a union and to associate freely without employer retaliation.

**Freedom of Thought and Conscience.** The Court has ruled that public schools are special places where freedom of thought and conscience should be protected under the 1st Amendment. Some samples:

"Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study, and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise our civilization will stagnate and die." Sweezy v. New Hampshire (1957).

"The classroom is peculiarly the 'marketplace of ideas.'" Keyshian vs. Board of Regents (1967).

"In our system, state-operated schools may not be enclaves of totalitarianism.... [S]tudents may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the State chooses to communicate." Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District (1969).

"[L]ocal school boards may not remove books from school library shelves simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books and seek by their removal to 'prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion.'" Board of Education of Island Trees v. Pico (1982).

**Privacy and Liberty.** In 1923, the Court recognized a constitutional right to "privacy" and "liberty," a right not to have the government—including public employers—intervene in personal decisions on marriage, procreation, and child-rearing.

Applying this principle, the Court has said that citizens have a constitutional right to send their children to private school (Pierce v. Society of Sisters (1925)), to have their children study a foreign language (Meyer v. Nebraska (1923)), to marry interracially (Loving v. Virginia (1967)), to both procreate and use contraceptives (Griswold v. Connecticut (1965)), and to reproductive freedom (Roe v. Wade (1973)).

NEA has used these cases to win lower court rulings that school employees can't be fired for refusing to have an abortion, for divorcing, or for having a child out of wedlock.

**School Desegregation.** With Brown v. Board of Education (1954), the Court changed the face of public education and explicitly acknowledged the vital role of public schools in the American democratic experiment:

"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. It is the very foundation of good citizenship [and] a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values."

**Church/State Separation.** School cases are where the Court has mostly strongly upheld separation of church and state.

In Engel v. Vitale (1962), for example, the Court prohibited state-mandated (but not individual) prayer in public schools and, in Stone v. Graham (1980), outlawed posting the Ten Commandments on classroom walls.

In 1973, the Court struck down a New York private school voucher program in PEARL v. Nyquist, a ruling that is now being challenged in several new voucher cases by proponents of antidisestablishmentarianism. ✔

**Michael D. Simpson**
*NEA Office of General Counsel*

### 'You've come a long way, baby...'

**School employees now enjoy a wide array of rights, but that wasn't always the case. Not all that long ago, female teachers in many states could be fired for getting married. Comtemporary courts upheld the practice on the "economic theory" that "married women should forfeit their positions to single girls who had no husbands to support them."**

**A 1935 study of teacher employment contracts concluded that school boards were obsessively concerned with the private lives of their (predominantly female) teachers. Some of the more "interesting" contract provisions:**

**Virginia teachers were prohibited from "keeping company with sorry young men."**

**In North Carolina, teachers had to promise "to abstain from dancing ... not to go out with any young men except insofar as it may be necessary to stimulate Sunday School work... not to fall in love... and to sleep at least eight hours each night."**

**Mississippi teachers had to promise not to"play society to the detriment of the school or unnecessarily frolic on school nights."**

**Missouri educators had to agree that they would lose their jobs "if [they] should smoke a cigarette, pipe or cigar at any time, in any place."**

**Noted one teacher: "I must live in the school district and remain here three week-ends out of four during the year. I must not dance, play cards, or be out late on week-nights; in fact, they want me to be an old maid."**

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**BABIES:** Some 83 percent of pregnant women received prenatal care in 1998, a record high. Meanwhile, teen birth rates fell 2 percent the same year, the seventh straight decrease. For more: www.cdc.gov/nchswww/releases/99news/99news/aidsfall.htm.

**CIGARETTES:** Anti-smoking campaigns can make a difference. Between 1992 and 1996, campaigns reduced per capita tobacco consumption 20 percent in Massachusetts and 16 percent in California. For more: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/osh/bestprac.htm.

**ENROLLMENT:** A quarter of the people in the nation today –72 million in all–are currently in school, from nursery level through college. K-12 enrollment stands just shy of the 1970 high. For more: www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school.html.

**HUNGER:** Most poor families not getting Food Stamps are unaware they're eligible. Families that are aware are often discouraged by an application process than averages five hours and two trips. For more: www.mathematica-mpr.com/NUTRIPUB.HTM.

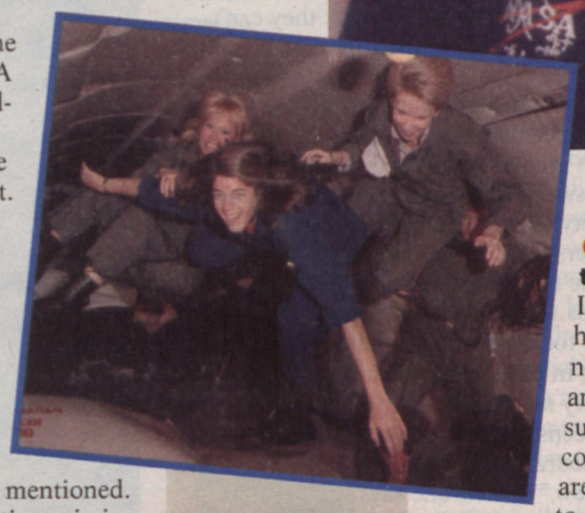
INTERVIEW

# Barbara Morgan
# Ready To Fly

**Idaho elementary teacher Barbara Morgan is in training to become the first teacher in space. She follows in the footsteps of her friend and colleague, Christa McAuliffe, who died in the 1986 Challenger tragedy.**

NASA

Space: the final frontier. Among the men and women chosen by NASA for space missions in the new millennium, NEA member Barbara Morgan is the first educator to be trained as a full-fledged astronaut. No stranger to the space program, Barbara Morgan, a third grade teacher in McCall, Idaho, was the backup to Christa McAuliffe for the original Teacher in Space mission. In the years since the Challenger tragedy in 1986, Morgan has continued to teach at McCall Elementary and work closely with the NASA space program. When NASA announced that educators would be added to its list of astronaut specialists, Morgan was the first name mentioned. As she prepares to become America's first education mission specialist, Morgan spoke with *NEA Today* staff writer Anita Merina.



**Q: Aren't you afraid?**
Not at all. We're all trained about the risks of space flight. But if you don't carry risks, you're not going anywhere. I'm not advocating doing anything overly risky, especially with kids, but to live life and learn, you've got to take risks. That goes for the classroom as well as space missions. That doesn't mean I won't be alert on the launch pad, but I know I will be prepared for every emergency.

**Q: Why is sending an educator into space so important?**
It's been my goal to make sure education is fully integrated into the astronaut corps and the astronaut job.

In choosing me and creating the education mission specialist position, NASA is saying that educators are just as important as geologists, physicians, engineers, and scientists to the astronaut program.

My selection also shows that NASA, even with all of its high-tech priorities, knows that we help our children most through teachers, and high-tech is no-tech without the corps of people who can pass the knowledge on to the next generation. A space mission is a terrific teaching opportunity.

**Q: How has being a teacher helped you become a better astronaut?**
For one, teachers are good learners. That's why we do so well in the classroom. In the complex environment of a classroom, you have to work with children of different learning styles. You need to figure every kid out and deal with curriculum needs, yet at the same time you also teach teamwork, skills mastery, and cooperative learning.

It's funny. When I first got here, one of the things they did was choose a round of expedition crews: cosmonauts, astronauts, and others to work and live together on a space station. They were looking at various skills and trying to determine how you train people to become good expedition workers. I couldn't help thinking that all they need to do is ask a bunch of teachers to come in. Educators are flexible, hard-working, and experienced in working in complex, enclosed environments—like the classroom.

■ NASA's education arm is easily accessible on the Web. Go to education.gov for a comprehensive listing of programs, links, materials, and more.

■ NASA Education Programs Database. This searchable database includes teacher development programs at all of NASA's research centers. The site offers contact information, admission requirements and more at ehbd.gsfc.nasa.gov/edcats/1999/nep/programs.index.html.

■ Also try the NASA CORE (Central Operation of Resources for Educators) for slides, videotapes, software, and laserdiscs at core.nasa.gov or eeca.esu.k12. oh.us for a catalog.

**Q: What was the toughest part of training?**
It's hard to say because I'm still in training. I have so much to learn. The toughest part right now is the space flight. There's so much to do and track in different areas. We train in the T38 supersonic jet trainer and work with the pilot and co-pilot on communication and navigation. There are endless checklists and systems, and you have to scramble to keep these complicated systems and procedures in your head.

**Q: Is there a timetable set on your mission?**
People always think that flying a mission is the ultimate goal, the carrot dangling out there for the astronaut corps. But to me, and to use teacher talk, the learning experience, the process, is key. You're wrapped up in it and it's exciting. Many of us haven't received a flying assignment or assignment to a space station. Others work as control specialists. We all play a key role.

**Q: What's your response to critics who challenge the expense of the space program?**
NASA has created a valuable learning opportunity for our nation's children, not only in the education programs related to past missions but also the great gains we'll make with educators fully integrated in its space exploration program. One current program is Earth-cam, a camera trained toward the earth from the international space station. The camera collects data for teams of middle school students participating in a special program run by astronaut Sally Ride and the University of California, San Diego. The students are doing exciting, original research.

**Q: Does your selection send a particular message to young girls?**
Recently, I sat with a group of women astronauts, and we recalled the first women in the space program. They opened the doors for astronauts like Eileen Collins, who never would have led a mission if her predecessors hadn't fought so hard. Glass barriers still exist here and there, but I hope girls will want to go into space. I also hope all children will see education as another road to space exploration.

**Q: Many of your students are too young to remember the Challenger and Christa McAuliffe. How do you help them understand?**
I don't think I have to do any explaining. The crew will always be remembered.

I learned so much from Christa, who felt her biggest challenge would be doing a good job representing teachers. Knowing her, I realized I had gotten into something a lot bigger than I thought. The universe is one giant classroom. ✔

Learning

# An Old Kid's Friend Spawns Something Brand-New

Weekly Reader, Newsweek *hook up on new publication aimed at getting kids involved in current events.*

Getting students hooked on news is a passion for **Sandra Maccarone**, editor in chief for the Weekly Reader Corp. in Stamford, Connecticut. So when she and her colleagues realized that there wasn't a timely news magazine for middle schoolers, they joined with the venerable *Newsweek* to create *Teen Newsweek*.

"It's vital for teens to stay informed and be interested in the news," Maccarone says. "Without that knowledge, they can't participate in the events that are shaping their lives or be part of our great society."

*Teen Newsweek*, launched in September, reaches 300,000 sixth to ninth graders. Packaged to look like *Newsweek*, the magazine offers enough variety to draw both female and male readers, Maccarone says.

The new magazine also gives students access to sources other than TV sound bites for their news—and offers teenage girls, in particular, an alternative to the beauty magazines that target them.

"Teens, as well as adults, need multiple sources of news and multiple points of view," Maccarone says.

With content closely tied to curricula, the magazine is primarily used in social studies classes to teach current events and civic studies. But Maccarone hopes that language arts teachers will begin adopting it.

The magazine features news stories, columns, a cartoon, a debate page, and an activities page for vocabulary, current events, and critical thinking, as well as related Web site listings.

Leo Sorel

**Impact:**
Maccarone has received more than 200 complimentary E-mails from teachers and students about her new magazine.

**For More:**
Contact Maccarone at smaccarone@weeklyreader.com. ✔

## Trends

**About 2 million high school students are expected to apply to colleges this year—that's more than ever before.**

**How are families coping with the increased competition, particularly at the more famous or prestigious schools? According to an ABC "World News Tonight" report that aired last fall, they're hiring college consultants.**

**While wealthy families have used them for years, this is a new trend for middle- and lower-income families. They shell out thousands of dollars for such services, partly because school guidance counselors are in short supply.**

# Helping Technology Answer Special Needs

Sandy Schaeffer

**Innovator:**
**John M. Williams**

**Job:**
"Assistive Technology" columnist for *Business Week Online* and editor of *Assistive Technology News*

**Bright Idea:**
Years ago, after taking a computer course to help control his stuttering problem, Williams wondered, "If a computer could help me control my stuttering, what could it do for someone who is severely disabled?"

Inspired by that curiosity, Williams became an expert on products for the disabled and eventually convinced *Business Week Online* to run his weekly cyberspace column, "Assistive Technology"—which now gets more than 30,000 "hits" on the Web the first day it appears.

"The computer is the great equalizer for people who have a disability," Williams notes. "It tears down communication barriers and allows them to compete."

His column is an invaluable resource for disabled teachers and students. One teacher recently requested help for a student who couldn't use a regular keyboard. Williams, who never endorses a specific product, sent her a list of companies that make large-key keyboards.

Another teacher wanted to know what technology could help a student who couldn't move any muscles from the neck up. Williams asked for more information—was the student mainstreamed, in special ed classes, or a combination?—and then quickly sent a recommendation.

Teachers also inquire about funding for assistive products.

"There are multiple sources out there," says Williams, who urges educators to seek funding information from state rehabilitation programs, Easter Seals, Medicaid, and even product manufacturers.

**Impact:**
Williams answered more than 2,400 requests for information last year—over 15 percent were from teachers.

"Teachers play more of a role in the life of a child with a disability than they know," he notes. "It's only through education that children can be accepted and get the opportunity to show what they can do. Teachers hold the future in their hands."

**For More:**
E-mail JMMAW@aol.com or call 703/404-9557. Visit www.businessweek.com/today.htm. ✔

# A College President Aims To Bust Some Barriers

*How should future teachers be attracted to the profession and trained? How should public education be defended and improved? Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College in New York and the author of Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture (Doubleday), is advocating some provocative new approaches.*

**What's wrong with how teachers are prepared to teach?**
Teaching has failed to gain respect partly because our education schools have defined their subject matter as pedagogy.

America organizes its teachers horizontally, according to the age of the pupils they teach. No other advanced industrial society trains teachers primarily in methods targeted at specific age groups.

Right now, a sixth grade English teacher works with a sixth grade math teacher more often than she does with first grade reading teachers, high school English teachers, or English professors. This method is justified by dubious precepts of age-appropriate educational science.

**What's your alternative?**
We ought to educate and organize teachers according to the subject matter they teach. The high school mathematics teacher and the elementary school math teacher should be taught by mathematicians and consider other mathematicians their colleagues.

But that isn't what's happening. Education schools are segregated from the rest of the university and looked down upon by other departments.

**How can we recruit more good people into teaching?**
We need real federal incentives. Years ago, I suggested that people who commit to public school teaching for a minimum of 10 years should be exempt from paying federal income taxes.

**What role do you feel unions should play in educaton?**
The rank and file have got to stand up and offer to police themselves. Teachers should decide who is qualified, not the state.

NEA should be setting the tone for the national debate on how public education should look in the next century—and address issues like the quality of teachers and classroom instruction and ways to reconcile excellence and equity.

Public education cannot be defended the way it was 30 years ago. Knowledge crosses state lines. It's part of interstate commerce. There is no federal constitutional barrier against spending America's resources on education nationally.

The unions must stand up for what they know is right. They should be striking on issues like class size, inadequate textbooks, and inadequate facilities. ✔

Leo Sorel

For More:
Contact Bard College at 914/758-7412.

# NEA Innovators

NEA members seeking information and resources for special needs students have a valuable resource in Association staffer Faye Northcutt.

During her eight years with NEA, Northcutt has used her extensive knowledge of technology to help NEA members integrate emerging technology into their work.

Northcutt is currently combining her technical expertise with her knowledge of federal regulations on students with disabilities to create a number of useful services.

One example: Last year, Northcutt hosted a national teleconference on the revisions to the federal IDEA law.

Northcutt has also worked with an NEA team to create a Web page explaining the changes in the IDEA. To visit that page, check NEA's Web site at www.nea.org/publiced/idea.

# Training Teachers for Success

**Innovator: Joyce Haynes**

Arthur Lauck

**Job:**
A teacher at Grolee Elementary School in Opelousas, Louisiana. Also a statewide trainer for new teachers, mentors, and assessors and a new board member of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

**Bright Idea:**
This spring, when Haynes starts her duties on the NCATE board—the body that accredits schools of education—she'll no doubt draw on her extensive experience with Louisiana's "New Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program."

In 1995, Haynes joined with fellow NEA members in Louisiana and convinced state lawmakers to implement the program, which replaced a more punitive assessment system that seemed more oriented toward penalizing teachers than helping them.

Now Haynes—who helped create the current assessment program—works to ensure that new teachers succeed. She trains both the mentors who advise first-year teachers and the assessors who evaluate them.

The key, Haynes emphasizes, is providing substantive assistance to first-year teachers, so they'll know what assessment criteria they have to meet. Mentors are trained to observe and advise new teachers in classroom management, planning, effective teaching, and professional development.

"In this role, I'm helping both veteran and new teachers," says Haynes, herself a veteran with 27 years experience.

Haynes especially enjoys training teachers to be mentors.

"It's a thrill for me when a teacher says this is great professional development," she says. "We are constantly reminding new and veteran teachers what needs to be done to enhance learning for children."

Haynes, who also teaches in-school suspension classes, was one of 14 NEA members who trained this summer to serve as an assessor for NCATE. This independent organization is backed by a wide variety of professional associations within education, including NEA.

Teachers play a key role in NCATE deliberations. One-third of the NCATE board is named by NEA and AFT.

As a new NCATE board member, Haynes believes she'll bring a unique perspective to the accreditation process.

"I'm able to look at how an education department works with student teachers," she says. "I know what students need to know when they get out of college."

In her work with NCATE, Haynes says she'll be looking for "innovative ideas for recruiting and retaining education students." She'll be exploring internships for students studying to become teachers and other ideas for placing students in classrooms even before they begin student teaching.

Haynes has even broader goals in mind as well. She's eager to do her part to help reach a major NCATE goal: persuading public school districts to hire only graduates from accredited colleges of education.

**Impact:**
Thanks to efforts by Joyce Haynes and her colleagues, Louisiana has become a trend-setter in progressive professional development and new teacher assistance.

"We have to see things that need changing and make the appropriate changes," says Haynes.

**For More:**
Contact Haynes at 318/942-3130 or JAPHaynes@aol.com.

# In a Michigan Class, Music Is Major

## The 'universal language' helped this media specialist get students of all competency levels excited about learning research skills.

Like most educators, Bill Farmer teaches a diverse student population, with varying learning styles and intelligence levels. For years, he had pondered ways to more effectively teach reading, research, and technology to *all* his students, even those who were easily distracted.

Farmer found a solution by marrying his two passions—teaching and music—in the fall of 1998. That's when Farmer, a media specialist at Bach Elementary School in Ann Arbor, Michigan, attended an educational summit in Kentucky.

Sponsored by the International Bluegrass Music Association and the National Music Foundation, the program gave public school teachers intensive training on using traditional music to teach core curriculum.

At the session, Farmer learned how music could be an effective tool in teaching kids—across learning styles and concentration levels—everything from vocabulary and math to social studies and geography.

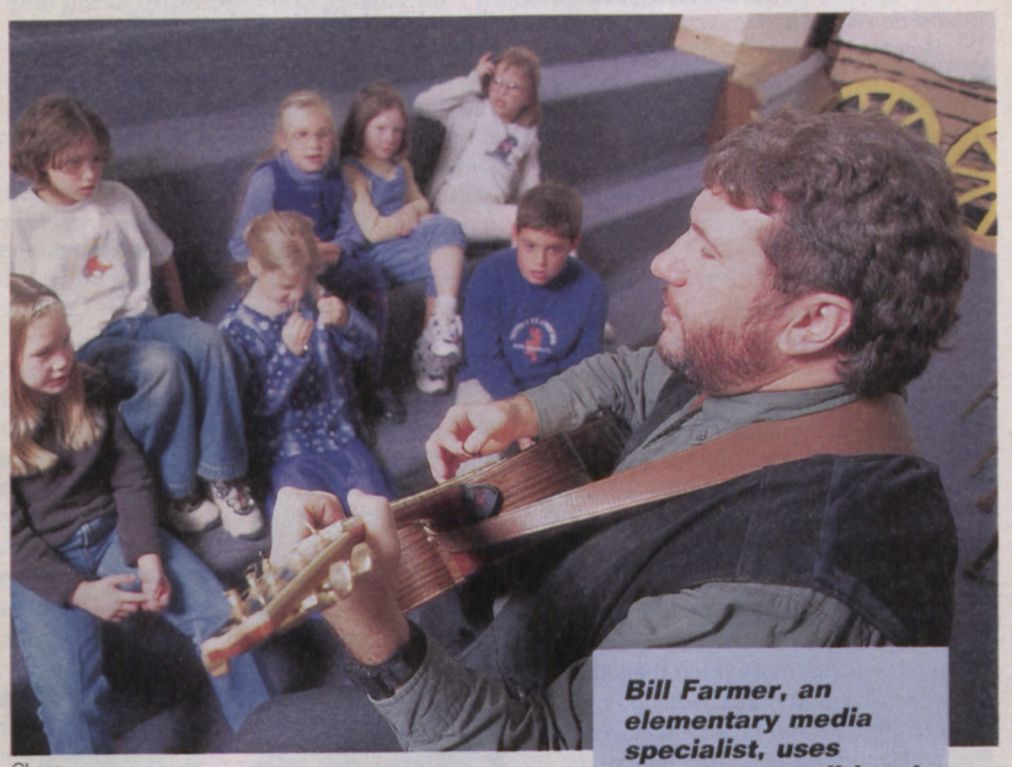
Through music, Farmer learned, students could "experience lessons in a way they hadn't experienced them before."

Back home, Farmer began infusing his lessons with music—and almost immediately noticed music's calming influence on his most distractable kids.

"The rhythm and pattern of music heightens students' attention and causes even the least attentive child to become engaged in the lesson," he says.

With the music, doing research has actually become fun for students.

"They enjoy coming to the library," says Farmer. "Some kids say it's one of their favorite parts of the day. They want to use the tools in the library, and that's my main objective—to get kids familiar with technology and media, to get them involved in research projects."



Chase

***Bill Farmer, an elementary media specialist, uses America's traditional folk songs, like "Lincoln's Last Train Ride," to calm—and reach—students who tend to be easily distracted.***

Before each lesson, Farmer looks for songs to accompany the study topic. He projects the lyrics on a screen and sings the song to kids while strumming his guitar. Kids get to dissect the song and interpret its references, providing insights into the topic that can digress into geography, history, vocabulary, and other subjects.

For example, when his fourth and fifth graders were learning about Abraham Lincoln, they read an account of his life. Then Farmer played the song, "Lincoln's Last Train Ride," a contemporary folk song that describes the days after Lincoln's assassination.

The song describes the different towns the funeral train passed through and the people who came out to bid Lincoln a final goodbye.

Kids, says Farmer, can "trace where the train went across the Allegheny Mountains to Springfield, Illinois." They also learn about Lincoln and how people felt about him.

"The song even made a few students cry," says Farmer, who invited them to discuss their feelings.

"This kind of experience—particularly when it evokes a strong emotion—is what they'll remember, and they're more likely to remember the lessons involved because of it," he says.

Farmer stresses that educators can teach any subject using American traditional music, which he defines as music

## How I Did It

**Larry Alexander**
Fifth grade teacher
*Tonasket, Washington*

*I developed an apple orchard project to enhance student understanding of life sciences, math, and other subjects.*

I got a $16,000 grant to start the project in 1997. It usually costs $15,000 to plant an acre of trees, but we did it for $2,000, thanks to community support.

People donated trees, labor, and materials. For example, to help us plant dwarf trees that need to be trellised, an orchardist donated wire, poles, and other items. Other volunteers taught pruning to my fifth grade students.

Dawson Alexus

In the classroom, we use the orchard to study growth regions of trees, cell growth from buds, and the area's apple-growing history. My students also take the kindergarten classes on tours of the orchard.

Using part of a $17,000 curriculum-development grant, I recently bought a computer and a digital camera for students to use.

Next year, I hope to incorporate economics and business. After harvesting and sorting the apples, students will sell gift boxes. They'll also learn about spread sheets.

We've won several awards for our work, including one from the Washington Education Association for fostering community support.

that has been passed down through two or more generations and usually tells a story, with historical references to events, people, and places.

Teaching with traditional music is also easy to do, says Farmer. Teachers can strum a song on a guitar, even if they're not accomplished musicians. Or they can play a tape or CD of a song to complement a subject.

The traditional songs, says Farmer, can even teach math. "John Henry," for example, talks about moving tons of coal, a point that could lead into a lesson

**'They enjoy coming to the library. Some kids say it's one of their favorite parts of the day.'**

on weights. Likewise, for "Lincoln's Last Train Ride," students can measure the miles the train traveled on a map.

Another song, "Shenandoah," speaks to human relations. The song tells the story of a fur trapper who falls in love with a Native American woman. It offers "a lesson in the importance of



Chase

following your heart," says Farmer.

"I feel as if I'm contributing to kids—providing them variety and intellectual stimulation and calming them as well," adds Farmer. "Perhaps because music is a universal language, it can transcend differences in people, their learning styles, and forms of intelligence." ✔

**For more, contact Farmer at wfarmer@edcen.ehhs.cmich.edu. To learn about the next International Bluegrass Music Association education summit, E-mail Nancy Cardwell at nancyc@ibma.org or call 888/GET-IBMA or 270/684-9025. For online lesson plans using music to teach core curriculum, visit www.nmc.org/frameset_amei.html.**

[ DILEMMA ]

# How do you finish all the paperwork required for special education students?

Ted Pitts

The amount of paperwork that goes along with each student enrolled in a special education program is incredible, and each year more forms and documentation are required. One student can have more than 10 hours worth of paperwork in a given school year.

The only way to keep up is to be organized and not leave the paperwork to the last minute. I make a plan at the beginning of the year of what is to be accomplished during each month and mark it on a calendar.

Instead of waiting for an IEP to come due, for example, it's a good idea to rewrite it in advance. Scheduling a few IEPs each month is better than having 20 due the last month of school. Often there's not enough time to finish the paperwork during planning periods, and I have to take work home. I have also resorted to completing work during lunchtime.

*Michael Berg*
Sixth grade special education teacher
Lake Worth, Florida

■ I used every spare minute at the end of the day to complete the "easy" parts of the IEP. When I had to complete the present level of performance and the upcoming year's goals, I would use the time that my principal allotted us for paperwork. If I hadn't had that time for testing and paperwork, I would have gone crazy!

But the paperwork did make me crazy enough—so this year I am teaching regular first grade. It is a shame that good special ed teachers leave the field because of paperwork.

*Lori Moore*
First grade teacher
Bend, Oregon

■ There are three ways to finish all the paperwork for special education students. Teamwork, teamwork, teamwork! At our school, we are lucky to have a team of professionals and paraprofessionals who believe in sharing the responsibility for working with students and handling the paperwork equitably.

Each certified teammate carries a caseload, proportionately assigned, based on student needs. The school nurse, for example, pitches in when physical needs are of concern.

Paraprofessionals mail notices to parents to maintain compliance with the law, keep and report data for progress reports, and copy drafts and revised copies of reports.

This approach allows us to focus on teaching and meeting student needs.

*Lansing Ermentraut, Barb Kelley, Paula Marks, and Allison Moeckel*
Middle school special education teachers
Littleton, Colorado

■ Isn't it amazing that educators are asked to do more each year, yet nothing is ever taken away and planning time remains the same?

Time constraints lead me to be creative when filling out paperwork for special education students. Because of confidentiality issues, I find it best to fill out my tracking sheets in our faculty workroom while I am running off copies or waiting for an available phone line.

Since either activity could take as long as 30 minutes, I usually finish the sheets in one visit and place them in colleagues' boxes as soon as I'm done.

*Alice Willingham*
High school English teacher
Morganza, Maryland

■ In my school district, new teachers are given a Special Education binder for organizing their paperwork. This makes it easy to slip in a copy of any modified work given to students. I just run an extra copy and make notes about the modifications on the top.

This is an efficient system that gives me more time to spend with all my special students.

*Susan Cannariato*
High school special education teacher
Baytown, Texas

## Got An Answer?

**How do you keep students from cheating?**

Send your answer by regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail to dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Please include your name, city, state, job title, and grade level, if applicable. Published respondents will receive a bright new *NEA Today* mug!

# Making the Right Math Connections

## A Maryland program gets middle-schoolers interested in math and teaches them to solve 'real-world' problems.

Photos by Sandy Schaeffer

***Sixth grade teacher James Koutsos is using everything from games to journal-writing to encourage his students to become explorers in mathematical problem solving.***

It's 80 minutes into James Koutsos' 90-minute sixth grade math class, and students are still engaged in the lesson. They stretch and wave their hands skyward, hoping to be picked to help solve a math problem. Their discussions are animated, even though this is the last period of the day at Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School in Montgomery County, Maryland.

But this is no traditional math class. It's Connected Math, an experimental student-centered curriculum that replaces rote memorization with "real world" problem solving.

Montgomery County is testing the program at five schools in an effort to boost math scores among middle and high school students who lag behind their peers. In Montgomery County, 75 percent of seventh graders overall passed the math part of the 1999 Maryland functional test, while Black and Hispanic student scores lagged 30 percent or more points behind their Asian and white counterparts.

Connected Math is an attempt by the county to try to narrow the gap in math achievement, says Koutsos.

"We're also trying to help build problem solvers," he notes, "because that's what the business community is looking for."

Connected Math is designed to give sixth grade students extensive time to become accomplished in algebra, the gateway to higher-level math.

"Algebra opens up all kinds of avenues for kids in math and the sciences," says Lee principal Stephen Bedford. "The more math they take, the better their opportunities."

It's too early to judge the full impact of Connected Math, but Koutsos says his kids are a lot more enthusiastic about math now and more eager to participate in class activities.

"There are less behavioral problems, too," he says.

The first component in every Connected Math lesson is the "hook," a game or story to interest students. Students then become "explorers," practicing the math concept in a variety of situations—often in a game-like atmosphere.

Next students "summarize" their thought processes, explaining, in a journal, how they got their answer.

"This puts traditional concepts in the context of problems kids need to solve," explains Koutsos. "Instead of just listing common multiples of a number and finding the least common multiple, they do this in the context of a real-life situation."

Problems to teach percentages, for example, might involve the challenge of what to tip a waiter for a meal or com-

# Idea Exchange

### ECZ Reader

I created a reading tool that helps students with dyslexia and other visual tracking difficulties keep their eyes focused as they read.

What I did was take a 2-inch by 8-inch piece of paper and add a transparent narrow yellow strip across the top.

The yellow line acts as a highlighter, focusing children's eyes on the text. It prevents reader's eyes from jumping over lines and from skipping words. I've seen remarkable changes in the reading speeds and achievement of dyslexic children and all children learning to read.

Sharon Cannon
Escanaba, Missouri

### Bird Watchers

At my school, I set up bird feeders around the campus. My students make daily observations of the species that visit the school. We are part of a national project sponsored by Cornell University called "Classroom Birdwatch."

After data are recorded and charted onto a computer, they are sent to Cornell.

Students in my science class then compare birds' responses to different types of feed and the weather.

Jeff Prosseda
Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

### Valentine Names

Early in February, I send home a class list of names from which students can write one another Valentine cards. Homework for that week revolves around that list.

Students alphabetize the list (by first name, then by last), categorize the names by various attributes, including the number of syllables, number of vowels, etc. Venn diagrams can be made by grouping names with double letters, those with consonants at the beginning, or both.

Listing words that rhyme with each name (be careful!) and making fractions that show the ratio of girls to boys are a few ways to inspire some fun homework.

Lynn Jones
Arcata, California

Works4Me
NEA's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

Have a great idea? Fax it to *NEA Today* at 202/822-7206 or E-mail: ideas@neatoday.nea.org. For more tips from NEA's weekly E-mail service, Works4Me, send an E-mail to lyris@list.nea.org.

- In the "subject" line, type: sign me up, NEA!
- In the message block, type: subscribe Works4Me
- Send the message.

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puting the sales tax on a CD.

Another Connected Math feature, the factor game, involves a contest where

**'Algebra opens up all kinds of avenues for kids in math and the sciences.'**

the winning strategies involve discerning between numbers with many factors and numbers with few. Students learn about prime and composite numbers by connecting to situations where factors, multiples, and prime numbers are important.

Connected Math is plenty controversial for those who believe math shouldn't be sugarcoated with games. But Koutsos's sixth grade students enjoy the program.

"It's fun. We get to figure out problems on our own," as student Donella Reid puts it. "Last year, the teacher would just give us the answers. But here we do mind traps, factor games, algebra on park trips, write in our journals. I'm doing better in math than ever."

Fellow student Solomon Johnson agrees: "It's easier to learn math this way. One lesson helps with the next and we have a lot of resources here."

Sums up Koutsos: "It's another arrow in our quiver. It's another resource to help kids understand math. And it's more fun to teach." ✔

**Recommended Reading**

***Every Child Mathematically Proficient*** **(Learning First Alliance, $3) addresses strategies for improving the math achievement gap between American students and their peers elsewhere in the world. Order online at the Web site of the NEA Professional Library, www.nea.org/books, or call 800/229-4200.**

**For more information contact James Koutsos at 301/649-8100.**

[ DILEMMA ]

# How do you develop critical-thinking skills in students who just want 'the right answer'?

Students want "the right answer"? No problem. Give it to them and have them explain the process by which it was derived. After all, that's what's important. Knowing where you're going is the first step in getting there.

*S. Anthony Yeash*
Math/computer education instructor
Cresaptown, Maryland

■ Two or three times a week—when the appropriate topics arise—my first graders and I do brainstorming activities. When we study insects, for example, we come up with as many ways we could think of that the world would look different if we were as small as insects. When we study clothing worn in different weather, I show a picture of a pocket, and we brainstrom all the things that might fit into the pocket.

Or we might write down the many things we could do instead of watching TV. This type of activity starts loosening students from the "one right answer" mindset.

*Carmen Bayley*
First grade teacher
Eugene, Oregon

■ As a reading teacher, I find that it's not so much the right answer I'm looking for as much as the application of specific skills and strategies. I reward the steps along the way more heavily than the correct answer. This approach forces "right answer kids" to develop the necessary critical thinking skills.

If students are looking for the right answer, it's up to the teacher to decide what the right answer is in specific circumstances.

*Dana Reisboard*
9th and 10th grade reading teacher
Narberth, Pennsylvania

■ As a math teacher with 34 years in the trenches, I'll tell you the only way to lead students to "the right answer" is to require proof of their thinking. I always say, "Show me the steps and the thinking. Tell me what you did, or no credit."

Every problem-solving activity gets treated with the rigor of a rubric called "C.A.N.U." C=commendable, well done, exemplary. A=acceptable, can you fine tune it? N=needs more work, and U=unacceptable, do it again. I also love to give problems with more than one correct response.

With practice, kids get it. Give them the tools and they can build and build.

*Gary D. Wiedeman*
Middle school math teacher
Yorba Linda, California

■ I often start off by giving students the answer and then asking what the question is. For instance, I might say, "The answer is eight, what is the question?" Responses range from examples of mathematical equations to questions like What time is it? What type of figure does an ice skater make?

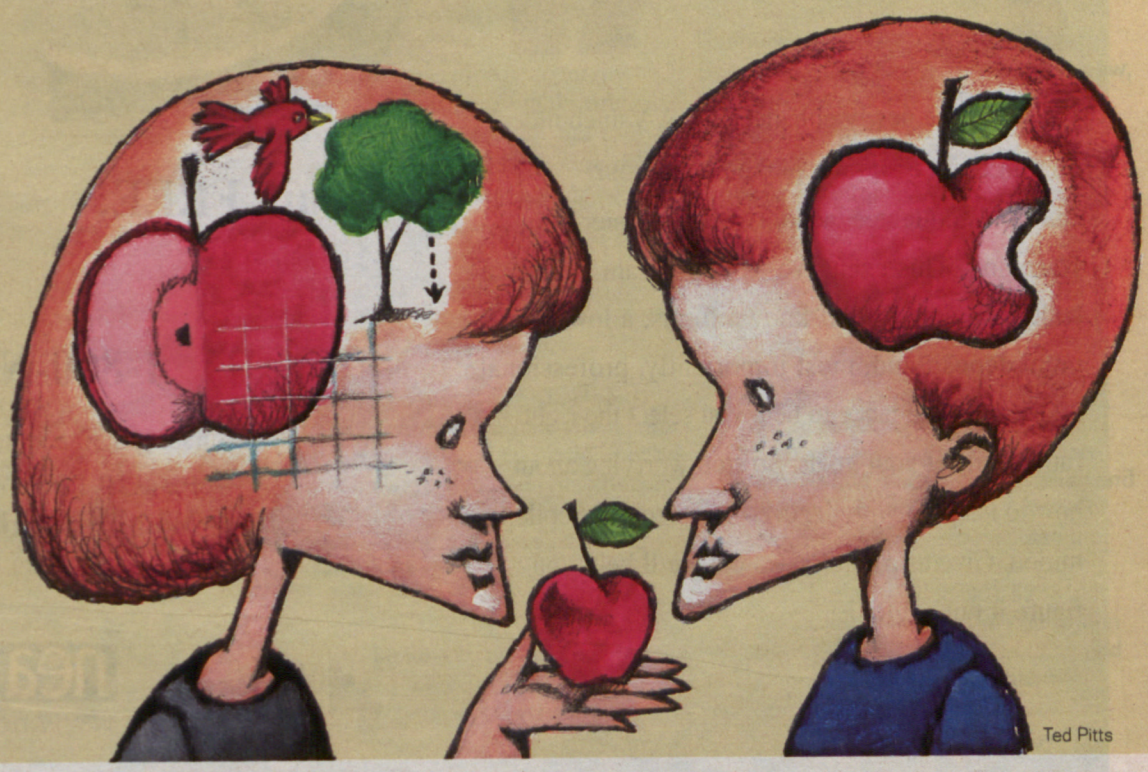
Once students see that they can "think outside the box," it becomes easier for them. But critical thinking must be taught and developed. Unfortunately, this does not come naturally for all students.

*Alva Sapp*
Elementary school gifted and talented teacher
Williamston, South Carolina

## Got An Answer?

**How do you handle disruptive students?**
E-mail your answer to dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Or send your answer by regular mail or Fax 202/822-7206. Please include your name, city, state, job title, and grade level, if applicable.

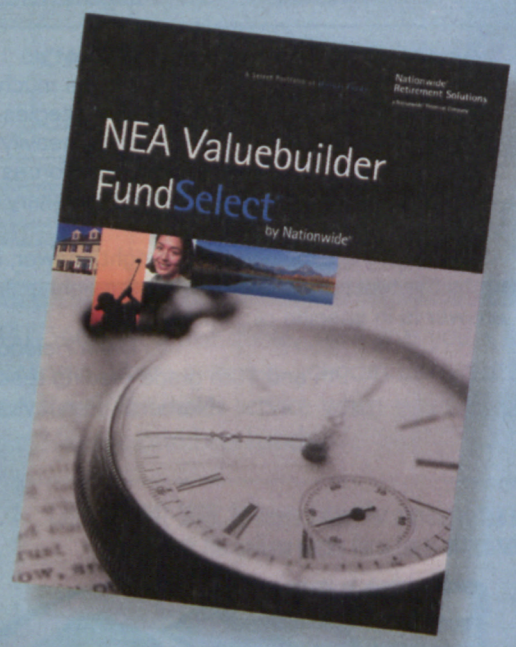
Published respondents will receive a bright *NEA Today* mug!



Ted Pitts

# Q. How can I possibly afford to send my kids to college without breaking the bank?

# A.

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MFNT0100

# Reading and Writing Go Hand in Hand

**Emphasizing standards and staff development, a new literacy program in Plainfield, New Jersey, gets the whole school involved in reading education.**

As a veteran teacher with 20 years experience, Valerie Marcinkiewicz, has seen reading reforms come and go. But she's excited about the newest reform implemented by her Plainfield, New Jersey, school district.

"It's effort-based, not ability-based," says Marcinkiewicz, the literacy coordinator at Hubbard Middle School. "All children are expected to achieve standards. No one says at the outset that certain children don't have the ability to achieve beyond a certain level."

The new Plainfield program, in place since September, is designed to get kids reading, writing, and talking about books, and Marcinkiewicz isn't the only teacher embracing it. The program is being taught in most district elementary and middle schools, as part of the America's Choice Whole School Reform.

According to Linda Simon, the literacy coordinator at F.W. Cook Elementary, teachers appreciate the extensive staff development that accompanies the workshop approach.

"No one is just saying, 'go do this,'" says Simon.

In addition, teachers receive in-service training on New Jersey's new standards, which gives them a better understanding of how to assess students' work.

By using a rubric to grade students' writing, for example, teachers know how many students do or do not understand organization and structure and can adjust lessons accordingly. Workshops at most schools last 80 minutes, allowing plenty of time for more individualized attention and small group instruction.

"We let kids see the rubrics ahead of time," Marcinkiewicz says. "There are no secrets. Everyone's on the same page, as far as knowing what's expected of them and what's good work."

As part of the program, elementary and middle schools are establishing classroom libraries and designating a "book of the month" to be read aloud in every class—and read by every school employee. Students are likely to be asked to discuss a book by a cook, custodian, or principal.

The program—which encourages students to read at least 25 books a school year—also links reading and writing, a departure from many other programs, Marcinkiewicz says.

For example, after reading *Arthur's Birthday* by Marc Tolon Brown to her first graders, Simon encouraged them to model the writer's technique of drawing in readers to start their own stories.

"I'm already seeing improvement," Simon says. "Children are only writing what they can read themselves, and they are using invented spelling. But they are asking, 'Do I have enough detail?' And they aren't as afraid to put something on paper."

Photos: Rachelle Omenson

***Plainfield's new reading program gives literacy coordinator Linda Simon time to read a "book of the month" to students (above) and offer individualized instruction (inset).***

At the middle school level, students are keeping reading logs where they write about novels of their choice using terms and topics discussed in class. They also keep a portfolio of their writing to track their progress.

So far, Marcinkiewicz is quite pleased with program results.

"It's amazing," she says, "to hear students in these small groups discussing authors' styles, and picking out good examples of closure or a clear point of view."✔

**For more, contact Valerie Marcinkiewicz at 908/226-2699 or Linda Simon at 908/753-3275.**

**Resource:**
***Scholastic Reading Inventory*** **is a new, literature-based interactive reading assessment program for grades 1-12. Prices start at $369 for a single computer license for 40 students. For more information call 877/268-6871.**

**Make Your Pledge Now**

If a million NEA members read with 20 million children and nobody hears about it, wouldn't it be a shame?

Let us know your plans for March 2 at www.nea.org/readacross.

Then, we'll let the rest of the world know the wonderful things that are getting ready to happen in every corner of the country. So, pledge to participate.

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## READING RESOURCE

How should young children learn to read and write? Elementary school teachers have pondered this question ever since the advent of formal schooling.

But a seminal new interactive guide, *Reading and Writing Grade by Grade: Primary Literacy Standards for Kindergarten Through Third Grade* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1999) offers a simple, concise approach.

The recommendations of the consensus document— written by 22 of the nation's leading reading and writing experts, from all sides of the reading wars—give teachers specific guidelines with detailed, easy-to-follow examples.

The document also recommends reading benchmarks for each of the early grades. For example, kindergartners should be learning phonemic awareness and know how to produce and recognize rhyming words and to isolate initial consonants in single-syllable words. Third graders should be reading multiple books by the same author and be able to identify differences among them.

Teachers and parents can use these benchmarks to determine if their children are on target and to ensure that students are reading and writing well by the third grade. For more about this resource, see the review on page 42.

To order, call 888/361-6233 or visit www.ncee.org. The publication costs $45 and includes reading and writing CDs that show students reaching the standards.

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†Eligible NEA family members include parents, spouse (or domestic partner) and children.

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# Beyond the Traditional Brick Box

## Designing schools for the 21st century

*Aging and outdated facilities, a burgeoning school-age population, and changes in curriculum and teaching methods have made school design a hot topic for the new century. As communities across the country grapple with these issues, architects are rethinking how schools will be designed.*

### Setting Priorities

Illustration by Karin Huggens

**One of the nation's newest stadiums, Comerica Park in Detroit, will cost $260 million, $100 million of that from public funding. Michigan's state and local district school construction spending for all of the 1996-97 school year totaled $463 million, the latest figure available.**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Survey of Government Finances, and www.ballparks.com

**Why do schools need to be designed differently?**

The factory model of education—where students shuffled along corridors into cookie-cutter classrooms every 45 minutes or so—worked well in the Industrial Age, says Steven Bingler, a national leader in innovative school design. But the Information Age demands school environments that foster critical thinking and teamwork.

Architecturally, this means designing project-friendly spaces that are more like studios than classrooms.

But classrooms also need flexibility, adds Bingler, founder of the New Orleans–based Concordia Architects. Moveable walls, for example, could be built to accommodate everything from quiet workspace to large lectures.

**How can existing schools be remodeled to meet 21st century needs?**

Chicago-based architect Paul Hansen of VOA & Associates is currently leading his community in the redesign of three area high schools. He finds many of his ideas in the business world.

Using the retail model, for example, Hansen redesigns school libraries to resemble super-chain bookstores, and cafeterias to look more like food courts. He also creates spaces for conferencing and brainstorming.

To adequately prepare students, says Hansen, new schools should be wired for fiber optics, internal computer networks, and videoconferencing equipment.

"But we're not totally moving away from the standard-lecture model," says Hansen. "Certain teachers work better that way. Some students like it, too."

**What role should the community play in the redesign process?**

The community should be involved in construction or redesign projects right from the start, says architect Bingler from New Orleans, who has more than 12 years experience in school design.

Planning should start, says Bingler, with a steering committee of about 100 people representing different community groups. Educators should make up about 25 percent of the committee, to help other committee members understand which ideas would benefit students and how they could best be implemented.

The steering committee should also include—and listen to—students, says Bingler.

"Kids don't know what doesn't work," he says. "They can be much more open to ideas."

**Is it difficult to design by committee?**

It's not easy getting school district leadership to hand over decision making to teachers, parents, community, and students, admits Bingler.

"Leaders don't know how to do it or trust the process," he says.

Full-scale community planning takes about a year to 18 months to complete. The planning process usually concludes with a steering committee presenting recommendations to the school board and the larger community.

The process may be lengthy, says Bingler, but all that time can help build consensus and support for public schools.

"If a plan is the community's idea, they'll vote for it," he says.

**The nation's schools desperately need updating, but many districts can't afford to redesign. Do they have alternatives?**

It's time, says Bingler, to change our 20th century thinking about how to build schools. He suggests putting schools in existing spaces, anything from an empty hospital wing to a museum.

"Teachers and students want to get out of the schools, to be connected to the real world," says Bingler, who has designed a high school inside the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. "The most important thing is student achievement. The right environment can really lift kids up to learn."

The nation can no longer afford to have buildings serve only one purpose, adds Bingler. He's currently developing a proposal that would help public schools in Washington, D.C., take advantage of "the world's biggest school"—the Smithsonian Institution's museum complex.

Schools, Bingler also believes, need to be built for and open to their surrounding communities. School buildings can double as multicultural arts centers. High school auditoriums can serve as community theaters. And school gymnasiums can be turned, after hours, into public fitness centers.

Bingler can even imagine establishing a school inside a stadium.

"It's empty all week. You could just move into it," he reasons, adding that he's inspired by teachers interested in athletics-focused curricula.

**What else is out there on the school design horizon?**

"Schools have only scratched the surface of distance learning and virtual reality," says Chicago architect Paul Hansen.

In the future, Hansen notes, students might telecommute for part of the school day, which could resolve some arguments over school starting times and allow night-owl teens to complete schoolwork at midnight and sleep in.

But, Hansen stresses, students and teachers would still need places to come together.

"There has to be human contact," he explains. "If it were so easy to learn calculus on our own from a book, why haven't more of us done it?" ✔

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**For details on school design, visit the Web site of the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities at www.edfacilities.org. Also check out designshare.com. Bingler's *A Citizen's Guide for Planning Schools as Centers for Community* is being published by the U.S. Department of Education. For availability, check www.ed.gov, call 800/433-7827.**

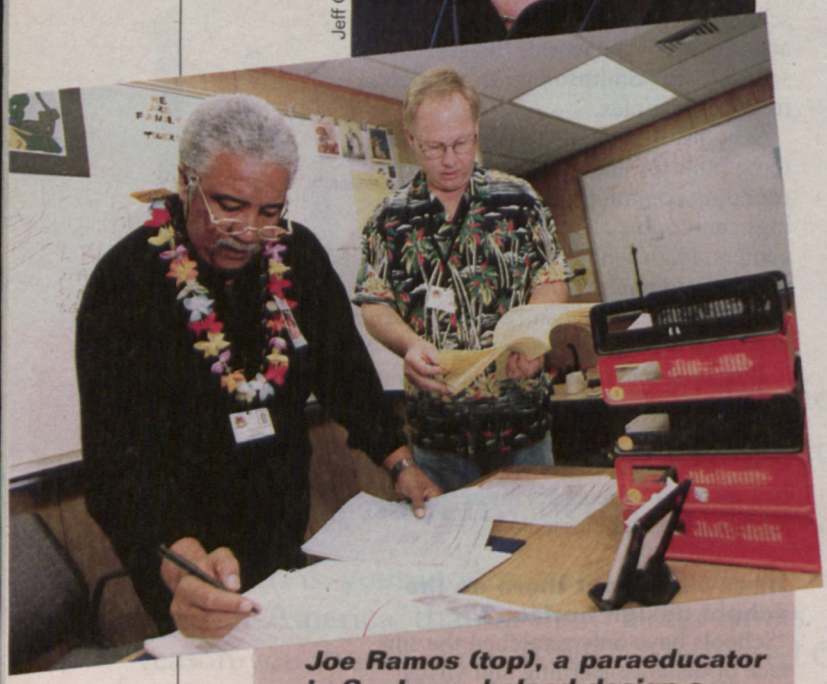
Learning

TEAMWORK

# Local ESP Leaders Build An In-Service Program in Spokane

**If you want a job done well, sometimes you just have to do it yourself. That's what a group of Washington State support staffers demonstrated when they took over the school district's ESP in-service training program.**

Jeff Green



***Joe Ramos (top), a paraeducator in Spokane, helped design a professional development program. With Ramos is traffic safety teacher Mike Mullin.***

The Spokane school district used to provide training on specific job-related issues for support educators in selected schools or work units. But the availability of training was always very spotty, and only 100 or so of Spokane's 1,400 plus ESPs would get any in-service in a typical year.

ESP leaders thought they had a better idea, recalls Joe Ramos, a paraeducator with the Lewis and Clark High School traffic-safety program.

Why not have ESP plan their own professional development? After all, support staff had planned a regional ESP Issues Conference a couple of years ago, and it was a resounding success, drawing nearly 200 school staff.

So when the issue of in-service training came up in bargaining in the summer of 1998, the Spokane Education Association—a 3,800-member NEA local affiliate that includes both teachers and support staff—had a proposal for management:

"Give us the $16,000 budgeted for ESP training, and we'll do a better job with it than you've been doing."

Management agreed to a one-year trial, and the Spokane Education Association's 15-member ESP Commission, chaired by paraeducator Joe Ramos, went to work.

The Commission surveyed support staff throughout the Spokane district and then put together three in-service days for the 1998-99 school year. Nearly 200 support staff turned out for each of the three in-service training sessions.

Workshops covered topics ranging from "How to Have Fun with Your Computer" to understanding and effectively using the district's new attendance and grading system.

All the participants received credits for attending, which made them eligible for district-paid stipends.

The ESP-led professional development in Spokane. notes local UniServ Director Sharon Bacon, reflects a change in attitudes that's been building over time.

Both support staff and administrators are realizing, explains Bacon, "that school support staff have demanding jobs and they need professional development options, just as teachers do."

In August, says Bacon, an assistant superintendent asked if the NEA local affiliate could get a group of secretaries to sit in on a training session the district was doing for administrators.

"The assistant superintendent wanted to get the secretaries' feedback on whether the training would be valuable for office staff," says Bacon. "This never would have happened before."

The school district has agreed to provide funds that will enable the Spokane Education Association to conduct in-service programs again this year, and the ESP Commission is hard at work on the project.

Joe Ramos, for one, is clear about who deserves the credit: "This didn't happen because of me or any one person. It's all of us—our local ESP committee, our local and state staff, the state and national organizations. This is a team effort." ✔

**For more information about Spokane's professional development training, contact Joe Ramos or Sharon Bacon at the Spokane Education Association, 20 E. Montgomery, Spokane, WA 99207. Phone: 509/325-4503.**

## Going the Extra Mile

You're never too young to learn about safety. That's why **Regina Kruse**, a bus driver and ESP local Association president in Illinois' Southwestern School District, has designed a creative bus safety program for preschoolers, kindergartners, and first graders.

On her training missions to elementary schools, Kruse uses a video, singing, play acting, and a short bus ride around town to literally drive the safety message home.

"We teach the children how to safely board and ride," she says, "and then practice crossing the road in front of the bus."

This creative program, in place for three years, gets high marks from parents and the community.

When **Sharon Konzem's** school bus is fully loaded during superheated summer weather in Pearland, Texas, this driver's handy thermometer can read from 104 to 108 degrees. And that's while the vehicle is in motion and the windows are down.

If Konzem's passengers were dogs, horses, or cattle, they'd be protected from that heat by the state's mandatory temperature regulations for animals in pounds and transport trucks. But they're little human beings and—wouldn't you know—no law protects them.

Pretty scary stuff. Pearland drivers, themselves dehydrated and drained of potassium after five hot hours on the road, find it hard to wake kindergartners at the end of the trip, their faces red and their little bodies covered with sweat. And the older kids, irritated by the heat, get into arguments and fights, distracting drivers.

Sam Harrel

***New Alaska PTA president Janice Louden is a special education aide at Lathrop High in Fairbanks.***

**TEAM PLAYER**

# Para with PTA Power

**Name: Janice Louden**
**Job title:** Special education aide and Alaska PTA President
**Experience:** Eight years
**License Plate**: LUVPTA
**What I do:** My involvement as a special education aide began eight years ago when my daughter was in second grade. Eventually my volunteer work developed into a job as a special education aide for the deaf education program. I worked at the elementary school for three years and then transferred to the high school, where I have worked for the last five.

Currently I work with intensive resource students. We teach life skills such as cooking, doing laundry, and shopping. And students learn about the community through volunteer work and work on academic subjects helpful later in regular education classes.

During the last eight years, I have become more and more involved in the Parent-Teacher Association. I was elected Alaska PTA president last April and assumed office in July.

Unfortunately, I live in Fairbanks, and the state PTA office is in Anchorage, 358 miles away.

I don't let the 11-hour trip prevent me from doing my job, but the long drive precludes frequent travel to Anchorage. Distance definitely doesn't keep me from working alongside the 17 other PTA Board members—I get a lot done through E-mail and voice mail.

With 16,000 members and 137 units all over the state, technology cuts down the distance between Nome and Juneau. But with a goal of increasing state PTA membership to 20,000 in 2000, our work is cut out for us.

**What I believe:** I truly believe that every person in a school building can make a difference in the school's atmosphere and the life of each student. I also think all parents need to be involved in their children's education to ensure their success. ✔

**To contact Janice Louden, send E-mail to louden@ptialaska.net.**

## RESOURCES

**Paras Bridge the Gap**
In classrooms with students from diverse cultures speaking diverse languages, one strategy is to tap students' native cultures for use in the classroom.

University of Southern California professors Robert Rueda and Carmen DeNeve say paraeducators from the students' communities can help create a bridge between students and teachers: Paraeducators "can strategically draw on their own funds of knowledge, which resonate with those of their students, to promote student learning."

Rueda and DeNeve report these findings in "How Paraeducators Build Cultural Bridges in Diverse Classrooms," reprinted on the Web by the National Clearinghouse for Paraeducator Resources (www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/Clearinghouse.html), a program of the Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research at the Rossier School of Education, Waite Phillips Hall, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0031.

**Comparing Apples and Oranges?**
ESP jobs are very different from private-sector jobs, even if the jobs have the same names. That's one finding of *Privatizing Public Schools—A Closer Look*, a recent report by the Michigan Education Association. The study determined that if the Lansing, Michigan, high school custodians did the entire set of duties of a group of contract cleaners in the Lansing Sears store, they would be doing only 41.7 percent of their jobs!

This is just one of the pitfalls of privatization pointed out in the MEA report, which is available online on the Michigan Education Association home page at www.mea.org.

To obtain a printed copy, contact Karen Cherry, Michigan Education Association, 1216 Kendale Blvd., Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48826-2573, phone: 800/292-1934.

**Does Your District Use Non-Conforming Vans?**
Traditional yellow school buses are manufactured to meet stringent federal passenger safety standards. But standard 8-15 passenger vans, which have not been modified to comply with these rules, aren't in conformance with the federal safety standards.

Many states prohibit the use of nonconforming vans for pupil transportation. The School Transportation Online Web site, at www.stnonline.com has information on this issue, along with resources on the "great seat-belt debate" and other key transportation issues.

School Transportation Online is the Web site of *School Transportation News*, a monthly national newsletter. Subscriptions to the print newsletter are $29/year from School Transportation News, P.O. Box 789, Redondo Beach, CA 90277, Phone: 310/792-2226, E-mail: schoolbus@ix.netcom.com. ✔

**Enough is enough. Konzem and Dolores Vails, both members of the Texas State Teachers Association, have set up "Koko's Bus Depot," a Web site to educate the public—and Texas state legislators—about the need for air conditioning on Texas school buses, even during the month of January.**

**So wipe the sweat off your computer keyboard and log in. Koko's address: www.geocities.com/Athens/Sparta/9265/index.html.**

**Janice Reese, a special education teacher associate in Fort Dodge, Iowa, works hard to develop teaching aids and strategies to accommodate each child's unique disabilities—and won't stop until she finds one that works.**

**Reese, winner of the Iowa State Education Association's 1999 ESP Award, hasn't failed yet to find a solution.**

**Reese has, for example, taught nonverbal students to communicate via sign language or a "spelling board." And she has used physical therapy to help students build the strength they need to better communicate, while providing them vocational training and getting them out into the community.**

**Reese's work with students doesn't end when the dismissal bell rings at Phillips Middle School. She often helps students after school, on weekends, and during the summer.**

**So good is Reese at what she does that she recently starred in a locally produced video as a role model for new teachers and support staff. Just the person these newbies need to know.**

**Reese is also an Association activist who has chaired her local's membership committee for the past two years.**

Learning

TIPS FOR THE WIRED CLASSROOM

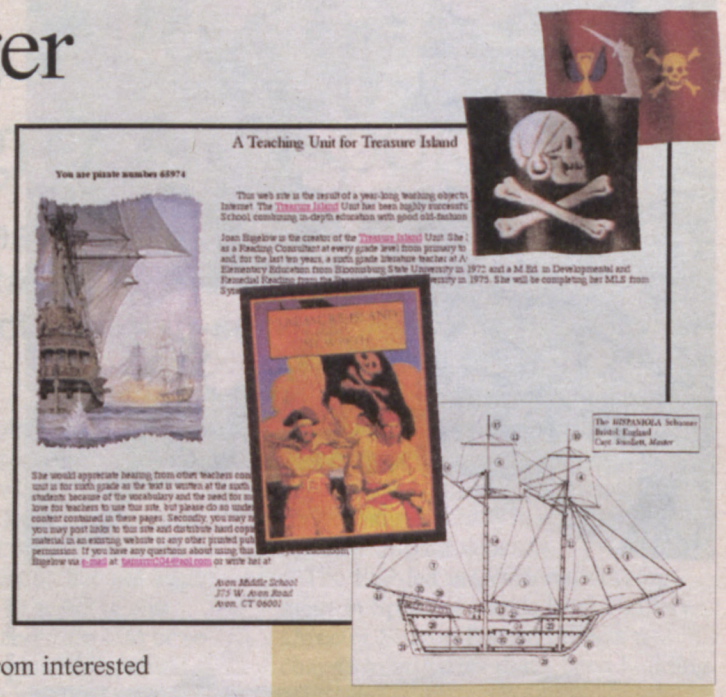
# Hoist the Jolly Roger

I have developed a Web unit for the novel *Treasure Island* at www.dreamcatchers.net/treasure. Educators will find a synopsis with instructions for a seven-week unit, as well as a day-by-day calendar for students and parents to follow.

The unit includes researching pirates using selected Web sites, learning 32 parts of a schooner for a seaman's test, and playing a treasure map game.

The site has received wonderful reviews, and I hear daily from teachers around the world, which creates a real community for sharing curriculum.

*Joan Bigelow*
Sixth grade literature teacher
Avon, Connecticut
AMSROOM204@aol.com




***For a Web unit on* Treasure Island *chock full of activities, set your sails for www.dreamcatchers.net/treasure.***

### Women of NASA

The Women of NASA interactive project (http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/women/) showcases different women in the sciences throughout the year.

The Web site features these outstanding women's bios and invitations to classrooms to join informative online chats. Some chats are in English and Spanish.

You'll also find logs of past chats, so you can see what kinds of questions have been asked and answered, as well as practice sessions on Thursdays, if you have never participated in an online chat before.

*Elise Tickner*
ESL specialist
Parkdale, Oregon
Tickner@gorge.net

### Pleasant Living on Jupiter

In our study of the planets, my students begin with a Net search, obtaining as much current information as possible on the planet of their choice. NASA has several excellent Web sites on space exploration, and one of my favorite sites is a teacher-created site at http://gps.lhric.org/middle/ems/aplanets.htm.

Students use word processing computers to write up their research, and they must include at least one image of their planet. Students are then paired to prepare oral presentations on the planet. They must be ready to explain some of the difficulties that must be overcome if the planet is to be explored in the future.

The students play the part of real estate agents trying to sell their planet to potential investors. They must plan future developments that will entice investors to choose their project, but their innovations must include information on how the students intend to work around their planets' tough conditions—such as Mercury's temperature extremes, Jupiter's horrendous gravity, Saturn's winds, and Venus's acid rain.

To make sure students take the assignment seriously, I have them deliver their presentations to our school's special education students, who play the role of the investors.

When the special ed students start firing questions, my students must be prepared—part of their grade rests on their ability to respond appropriately to questions from interested investors.

With my students teaching them about the solar system, both groups benefit.

*Pamela Galus*
Earth science educator
Omaha, Nebraska
alrollms@juno.com

### Incorporating E-mail

To emphasize the importance of communication, time management, business skills, and follow-through, I send my students E-mail on the daily activities of our 90-minute block.

I include information about any school and class announcements, the day's lesson and testing schedule, links to pertinent Web sites, or highlights from our classroom Web page.

Students are required to check and answer E-mail the first and last few minutes of each block period.

Sometimes I surprise students by randomly sending them an E-mail question that turns into a test grade. This encourages them to make it a daily habit to check E-mail and respond, and it gives students who were absent a documented record of class activities—reducing the need for me to discuss make-up work.

Students are also required to file each E-mail message in a folder for documentation. Correspondence they send me must also be filed.

E-mail has been a wonderful management tool for me as a teacher, as well as a disciplined learning exercise for the students.

*Diane Bennett*
High school technology teacher
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee
bennettd1@home.com

## My favorite Web site

**Should food that is genetically engineered be labeled for consumers? Is food engineered already? Learn more about genetic engineering at my DNA for Dinner Webquest page, www.gis.net/~peacewp/webquest.htm.**

William Peace
Science teacher,
South Dennis,
Massachusetts

## Tech Tools

- Lightspan PageOne (www.lightspan.com) is a free Internet service that gives teachers one-click access to over 115,000 grade-appropriate and educator-reviewed Web sites for integration into lessons. It also allows teachers to create classroom portfolios and post homework assignments.
- Visit the Quiz Lab at FunBrain (www.funbrain.com) to find a huge database of ready-made quizzes in eight subjects—and help for constructing your own quizzes. Students take the quiz online, and the graded results are E-mailed to you.
- Tramline is offering a free 30-day trial of TourMaker©, its Virtual Web Tour authoring system. To use the software, you'll need a PC, Windows, and at least Explorer 4. The software can be downloaded at www.tramline.com/tm/index.htm. Want examples of Web tours to get you started? Go to www.fieldguides.com.

## TALK TO US:

**Have a nifty classroom tip or lesson plan that uses technology? E-mail a description (under 200 words, please!) to wiredclassroom@list.nea.org.**

**Is there a Web site, CD-ROM, or piece of software you can't live without? E-mail your favorites—and why you love them—to myfavoritetech@list.nea.org.**

**Or send your responses by regular mail to *NEA Today*, or by Fax to 202/822-7206, or through the Web at www.nea.org/cet.**

**Those published here will receive a sparkling *NEA Today* mug!**

# Good News for Reading

## A Texas teacher uses the Internet, cable TV, and newspapers to improve the reading skills of her middle school students.

***'Blame it' on the news media: Reading scores are up in Texas teacher Wanda Zamorano's classes.***

Kester Gilhome

**Who:**
Wanda Zamorano, reading teacher,
Bedford Junior High School, Bedford, Texas

**E-mail:**
zamoranw@heb.isd.tenet.edu

**Inspiration:**
Unsatisfied with textbooks and traditional teaching methods, Wanda Zamorano went looking for a way to engage her middle school students' interests and boost their reading skills. At a meeting held by her NEA state affiliate, she learned about the daily cable TV program "CNN Newsroom"—and the puzzle pieces began to fall into place.

Zamorano's seventh through ninth graders now improve their reading through a combination of cable TV, copies of *USA Today*, and online news sources.

"'CNN Newsroom' covers the day's headline news stories from around the world," she says. "My students are completely engaged in learning about current events."

Since Zamorano began integrating news sources into her classes, her students have consistently received the highest rating on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills both in content and literature reading.

"By providing my students with the tools of television, the newspaper, and the Internet, I empower them to improve reading skills in a multimedia world," Zamorano says.

**Lesson:**
Every Tuesday Zamorano's home VCR is set to tape "CNN Newsroom", a commercial-free program geared for educational use that airs from 4:30 to 5 a.m. ET. When she gets to school, Zamorano visits the "CNN Newsroom" Web site and downloads lesson plans and discussion questions built around the day's top stories.

"'CNN Newsroom's' Web site is wonderful because it puts teachers in the driver's seat, without them having to reinvent the wheel," she says.

Zamorano scours the videotape for one or two short segments that fit with the reading concept she's teaching—the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, for example, was a great way to illustrate cause and effect.

After her students view the segments, they pick up *USA Today* to read related articles.

"Do they comprehend what they're reading better after watching a segment on 'CNN Classroom'?" asks Zamorano. "You bet!"

Students also use the classroom's one PowerMac to read additional articles and in-depth information on the "CNN Newsroom" and *USA Today* Web sites.

"Reading articles on the Internet gives students different perspectives on the story and challenges them to think critically," Zamorano explains.

Besides improving reading skills, students gain a foothold in history, journalism, math, science, and other core subjects. When the world's population hit 6 billion, for example, Zamorano used news coverage to discuss the impact of population growth on food, housing, health care, and education.

**Click:**
Building a lesson around the day's headlines might sound hectic, but Zamorano insists it's easy, thanks to the wealth of resources for educators on "CNN Newsroom's" and *USA Today*'s Web sites. Plus, she enjoys being kept on her toes.

"I have no idea what's going to be in the news next Tuesday," Zamorano sums up. "When you've taught for 30 years, you like that element of freshness." ✔

*—Erik Komendant*

**To learn more about CNN Newsroom, call 800/344-6219 or go to www.turnerlearning.com. *USA Today* is available online at www.usatoday.com.**

## My favorite Web site

**Cultural Connections (http://library.advanced.org/50055), created by teachers, is filled with country facts, pictures, maps, activities, and recipes. It's a great learning tool for K-5 students!**

Karen Biddinger
Computer teacher
Marlton, New Jersey

# Bytes for Beginners

**Help! Whenever I search for something on the Internet, I get 6,834,922 results, most of which lead to Web pages that aren't helpful. How can I search more efficiently?**

You can do two things: Understand your search tools and how they work, and learn which search tool is right for the job.

There are three basic types of search tools available on the Internet:

*Online references* are specialized search tools managed by organizations to help you find specific information, from acronyms to zip codes. For example, it's much easier to use the U.S. Postal Service's Zip Code Look-Up reference (www.usps.gov/ncsc/lookups/lookup_zip+4.html) than to search the entire Net for a zip code.

*Meta pages* are databases composed of Web sites that have been vetted and catalogued manually. You can either peruse specific selections or use a search interface to find what you're looking for.

Yahoo! is an excellent example of a meta page search site that organizes Web sites in categories ranging from "Arts and Humanities" to "Society and Culture."

*Search engines* index the majority of Web pages across the Net. But each search engine has its own way of doing things. Some catalog every word of every Web page, while others capture only Web page titles and the first few lines of text.

So, if you're searching for obscure data, use search engines that index more page content. Go to www.searchenginewatch.com to learn how search engines operate.

*Have comments or questions about technology? Go to www.nea.org/cet, or E-mail your questions to webeditor@dear.nea.org.*

# Smiling Faces, Faraway Places

**New Jersey teacher Christine Stockton leads the Lawrence High School Operation Smile youth club, part of an international effort to help kids.**

Rachelle Omenson

"This is the most rewarding thing I've done in my teaching career," says **Christine Stockton**, faculty advisor to the Operation Smile youth club at Lawrence High School in Lawrenceville, N.J. "You can really see the before and after results."

You may have heard or read about Operation Smile. It's an international nonprofit that sponsors doctors who voluntarily perform plastic surgery—on cleft lips and palates, club feet, burn scars—for poor people around the world. Lawrence High's 160 enthusiastic members helped raise $10,000 over the past year to pay for more than eight operations that put smiles back on mostly kids' faces.

Stockton and 14 of her students have been chosen, via a rigorous selection process, for overseas medical missions to Thailand, Vietnam, and Ecuador (see inset photo). Others have gone to local hospitals, where they meet the operation candidates, teach health awareness, assist with pre-op, and help in the recovery room.

"Two students go on each mission, and they get so much out of this," says Stockton. "It raises awareness about handicaps."

Stockton started Operation Smile five years ago, in response to student interest. A veteran educator, with 27 years in the Lawrenceville system, Stockton currently teaches sculpture, pottery, and computer graphics. She's been at Lawrence High for 12 years.

"I enjoy teaching," she says, "but as far as giving back, in a humanitarian way, this project is really tops on the list." ✔

## A Man with a Mission

At the stroke of midnight on December 31, you won't find **Tom Vogel** celebrating the next millennium. January 1, 2000, says Vogel, is a year too early for celebration.

"We shouldn't be celebrating the millennium until 2001," says the West Virginia math teacher. "And we shouldn't teach our kids something that's fundamentally wrong."

Vogel feels so strongly about the issue that he drafted a new business item about it for consideration at the NEA Representative Assembly last July in Orlando. In a close vote, delegates aopted the item, which calls on NEA to promote the mathematical "true beginning" of the millennium.

Back home, Vogel continued to swim against the tide, writing letters to local newspapers and television stations, as well as to national programs and notables like "Dateline" and President Clinton.

"It's all tied up in money," says Vogel. "Next year, we'll have the sequel, Millennium 2, and everyone will make more money." ✔

Craig Cunningham

Sandy Schaeffer

## Ohio Teacher Boosts National Board Certification

**Carole Moyer** from Ohio is an ambassador for national certification for teachers. And, like most ambassadors, she came to Washington, D.C. recently ... and went right to the top. At the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards annual meeting, Moyer had the honor of introducing the President of the United States. For Moyer, an elementary teacher and one of 1,800 nationally certified teachers, the moment was quite a thrill.

"National certification is important," says Moyer, "because teachers need to adhere to rigorous and high standards. I finally felt like a real professional when I was certified after 28 years of teaching."

In his remarks, President Clinton voiced strong support for national board certification and for legislation, passed later in the fall, that will allocate more federal funds to help hire 100,000 new teachers. ✔

## A Painter's Pride

A full-time groundskeeper at Beaver Area High School outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, **Becky Quigley** wanted to do something to make children's experiences at Brighton Township Elementary as memorable as they could be. What better way, she figured, than by immortalizing students in a school mural.

"I wanted to do something for the school and, most importantly, the children," says Quigley. "Children are the reason we're here."

Brighton Elementary's cafeteria had just been painted pink, and Quigley, a part-time custodian at the time, saw an opportunity to add life to the blank concrete block wall via a mural. She took her idea to the school principal and won a go-ahead. Then Quigley was off to the races.

"Initially I sketched the images of just a few children," says Quigley. "But, while I was painting, more children asked to be a part of the mural, and I just couldn't say no."

No kidding! Soon the number of faces grew to 385, and the project went on to span more than two years, beginning with the sketches, then on to detail and color, all with the help of friends.

"I get to leave a lasting contribution," she says. "It's something all the children who pass through Brighton Elementary can appreciate." ✔

John Heller

## Best Writers Come Calling

Famous people keep showing up in Dowagiac, a town of about 7,000 people in western Michigan. That's no coincidence. Nine years ago NEA members **Rich** and **Teri Frantz** were trying to come up with a way to spark their high school students' literary interests and hit on the notion of inviting famous writers to come to their school to talk about their craft. Famous writers have been visiting Dowagiac ever since.

Amy Tan's been here, so have Joyce Carol Oates and Kurt Vonnegut, too. The school visits coincide with the town's annual Fine Arts Fair.

"The writers are usually willing to meet the students, because most are professors themselves," says Teri Frantz.

Gwendolyn Brooks was the first author to come to the 75-year-old, unconditioned auditorium at Dowagiac Union High School. This fall, Joseph Heller, pictured here with Rich and Teri Frantz and two other faculty, visited to talk with students during the day, followed by an evening lecture and a wine-and-cheese book signing.

"After meeting the authors, students learn to think beyond their little hometown, and they start considering things they had never thought about," notes Teri Frantz. "But the main purpose is to inspire students to want to read." ✔

Jennifer Giesey

# Let's make candidates measure up for children and public education

**With the 2000 elections coming up, we need to know which candidates are – and aren't – supporting the issues that have a positive impact on children, public schools, and education professionals.**

**That's why before the NEA recommends any candidates, we make sure they measure up on the issues we care about:**

- **Strengthening Public Education**
  Increased funding for schools and colleges, opposing vouchers and privatization, and modernizing school facilities.

- **Ensuring Children's Health & Safety**
  Supporting safe schools programs, continuing Head Start, and increasing health and nutrition programs.

- **Maximizing Student Learning**
  Smaller class sizes, early childhood education, programs for disadvantaged children, vocational education, college scholarships, school-to-work, and updating technology.

- **Respecting School Employees**
  Higher salaries to keep the best employees, inclusion in decision making, and increased funding for professional development and professional growth.

## NEA Election 2000:

### Making Sure Candidates Listen To Us.

Your Voice Is Important... Let us know what you think by visiting our Web site @ **www.nea.org/lac**

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# Don't Believe the Hype!

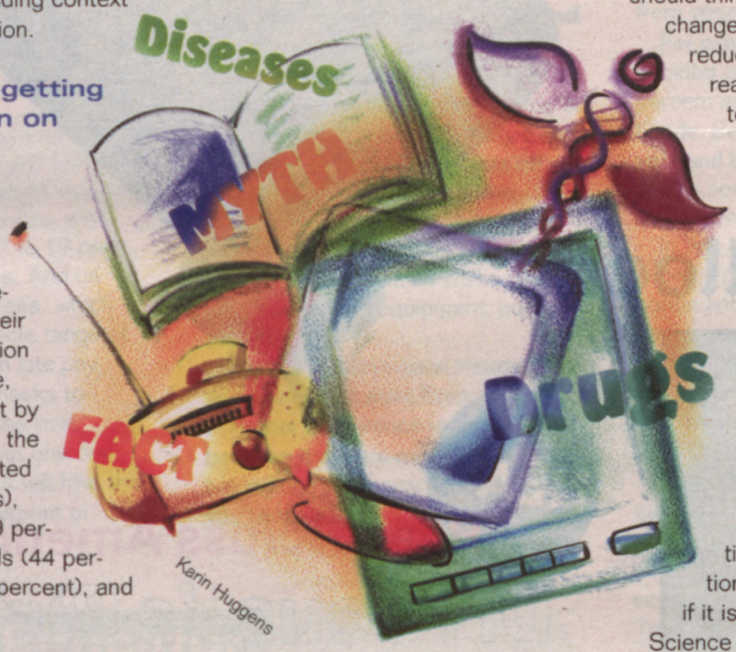
**Many kids get their health information from the media, but headlines, soundbites, and information on the Internet can be misleading. How can NEA members help students distinguish facts from myths? Rena Large of NEA's Health Information Network recently served on a Harvard University steering committee to help consumers take charge of health information. She offers these insights.**

### Why are there so many conflicting health reports in the media?

Rapid changes in science and technology have led to health advances that make the news virtually every day. The emergence of the Internet has also increased access to health information. But media sources—even reliable ones—don't always tell the whole story. Instead, they report flashy findings or startling statistics without providing context or supporting information.

### Where are kids getting their information on health?

According to a recent survey of kids ages 10 to 13 by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, preteens cite moms as their top source of information on AIDS, sex, violence, drugs, and alcohol. But by age 13, moms drop to the number five source (cited by 38 percent of teens), behind the Internet (39 percent), teachers/schools (44 percent), TV/movies (61 percent), and friends (64 percent).



Karin Huggens

### How should students analyze health information?

The first step is to ask what message is being conveyed. It's important to focus on the facts, not the presentation. Media sources often personalize information, using emotional testimonials or warnings to make it more interesting. Teens should also make it a habit to look at all sides of a story.

Once students have identified the main point, they need to identify the original source. Is that source, for instance, a university, a nonprofit association, or a pharmaceutical company? If the original source is not obvious, the reporting source (TV, radio, newspaper, or advertisement) should be able to indicate where the information came from.

### How can students tell if the source is reliable?

Students should think about what motives the source might have for promoting the information. The next step: Look for corroborating information. What other studies or reports have been done on the topic or issue? Do experts in the field agree with the findings?

### How can educators help students determine what information is valuable?

First, determine how a reported health risk or issue might affect students. Then, frame the information in immediate terms. Many children, particularly adolescents and teenagers, don't respond to warnings about the long-term consequences of their current behaviors. The risk of getting cancer in the distant future, for example, may not convince students not to smoke, but short-term risks—like yellowing teeth, bad breath, and shortness of breath—might deter them. Learning to analyze the different ways a health finding may impact them, today and in the future, can help students decide if they should act on the message.

In addition, students who decide that a finding does concern them should think about what lifestyle changes they can make to reduce risks. They should also realize that, when it comes to health, what their peers choose to do may not be the right course for them to follow.

### How can educators boost kids' analytical skills?

Giving kids assignments that require further research or investigation are perfect ways to introduce them to the concept of objectively examining information and deciding if it is relevant and reliable.

Science and math assignments, in particular, can be ideal for teaching kids to be health detectives, examining a piece of evidence, or calculating the probability of risk.

With a recent news report about a new cancer-prevention drug or an after-school TV special about eating disorders, you can both make connections with classroom subjects and initiate classroom discussions about health issues. ✔

## HEALTH RESOURCES

- *Health Insight: A Consumer's Guide to Taking Charge of Health Information*, by Kimberly Thompson. This project of the Harvard School of Public Health's Center for Risk Analysis helps consumers evaluate information to detect their own health risks. Visit www.healthinsight.org/ ns/index.html or contact Bryan Sweet at 617/432-1117.
- New instructional videos from Maryland Public Television include *EnviroMysteries*, which empowers students to make informed decisions about environmental issues, and *Numbers Alive!*, which helps kids make sense of probability, percentages, and statistics. For more, visit www.mpt.org or call 410/356-5600.
- BioRAP®, a new discovery series for inquiring science and health students, offers teachers, parents, and students online guides on topics that range from "risk assessment" to "facts or fiction in science." For more information, point your Web browser to www.biorap.org.

NEA·HIN

*From the* **NEA Health Information Network**

**New Web Site**
For links to major health sites on issues involving school staff and students—issues that include mental illness, sexually transmitted diseases, and the environment—visit the NEA Health Information Network's new and improved Web site at www.neahin.org.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
Features information networks and other sources. Visit www.cdc.gov/other.htm or call 800/311-3435.

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**
Includes basic and timely guidance on food, cosmetics, medicines, medical devices, and other products. Visit www.fda.gov or call 888/463-6332.

**healthfinder®**
Provides a gateway to reliable consumer health and human services information. Visit www. healthfinder.gov.

**National Health Information Center**
Provides links to toll-free health lines and clearinghouses and an annual calendar of health events/themes. Visit http://nhic-nt.health.org or call 800/336-4797.

**U.S. Public Health Service**
Offers information from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Visit http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov.

**U.S. Consumer Gateway**
Provides links to federal consumer information. Visit www.consumer.gov.

**National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information**
Offers the latest information and materials on alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment. Visit www.health.org/ or call 800/729-6686.

**National Institutes of Health**
Offers detailed information on consumer health issues, clinical trials, health hotlines, funding opportunities, and much more. Visit www.nih.gov.

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# In a Quandary About Credit Cards, Insurance, Mutual Funds?

## Q: I've run up a big balance on my credit card. Does it make sense to shift it to a low-rate card?

**A: Perhaps. There is a lot of competition in this marketplace, and you should be able to get a good rate. But there are some pitfalls, too. Before you transfer your balance, promise yourself that you'll stop spending and work on paying down the balance. If you see the low rate as a new opportunity to spend, you'll be defeating your purpose.**

You should also know about the hidden fees that might be lurking behind a low interest rate. For example, some card issuers charge a fee of 2 to 4 percent on the balance you transfer. Don't accept one that does.

Check, in addition, to find out what fee you'll be charged for new purchases. The card issuer may be using the low rate as a lure, with plans to charge you 17 to 19 percent on new purchases. And be careful about penalty fees, which can be applied to a whole range of things, everything from late payments and bounced checks to charges that go over the limit.

If your payment is just one day late, some card issuers will hike the interest rate—to 20 percent or more. They use the low fee to get your business and then stick you with a high fee when you're not paying attention.

Other hidden fees: Extra charges—maybe 4 percent—and higher rates for cash advances than for other charges and a special fee for those who don't carry a balance.

## Q: I rent an apartment. Do I need homeowner's insurance?

**A: Yes, although it's actually called renter's insurance for you. You need it for the following two reasons.**

**First, for liability purposes. If people are injured in your apartment, they can sue you. Your renter's insurance will protect you. Second, you need insurance on your personal belongings.**

I remember when I was working at my first job at the *Kansas City Star*. My friend, a travel writer, was off on a trip when her apartment was totally stripped—every knife and fork and towel and shoe and pair of sox and underwear, as well as her television, audio equipment, books, and jewelry.

My friend didn't have insurance, and she had to start from scratch.

Renter's insurance is also good because it covers most of the belongings you carry with you when you're traveling.

## Q: How often should I review my mutual fund portfolio?

**A: Once a year. January is a good time. As you know, you shouldn't be looking your funds up in the newspaper every day, panicking and second guessing yourself. But January is a good time to determine how your funds have performed and to rebalance your portfolio.**

Collect all your statements, including those from the end of 1998. Many statements show you what percentage of your account is in each fund and what portion is in stocks, bonds, and cash. If your statement does not, do it yourself. Then look at your actual asset allocation to see how it has diverged from your target strategy.

For example, suppose you decided on a simple allocation: 65 percent in stocks and 35 percent in bonds. Because stocks did well last year and bonds did poorly, maybe you're now 68 percent in stocks and 32 percent in bonds.

In that case, you need to rebalance by putting more money into bonds and less into stocks until you've reset your allocations. This is one of the most difficult things for investors to do. It's much easier to buy the recent winner than the recent loser.

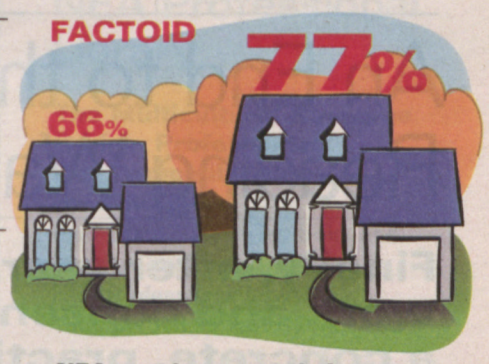
This is also the time to make certain each fund is doing what it is supposed to do. Calculate the overall performance of your portfolio and compare it with market indexes. Then separate your account into categories like stocks, bonds, and cash and compare each category to that market. If the value of your stock account is up 10 percent and the market is up 20 percent, you want to know why.

Examine each fund to see how it did compared to its peer group. Look at the fund's annual report to read what the portfolio manager says about performance and expectations. Was this one bad year for the fund? Or the second or third?

I believe you should be a patient and careful investor. I will hold onto a lagging fund if I believe I picked it for the right reasons. But three consecutive years of subpar performance tells me I should throw in the towel. ✔

*—Mary Rowland*

*Mary Rowland is a regular contributor to several major financial planning magazines.*




**NEA members own their own homes at a significantly higher rate than the national average: 77 percent of members own homes, compared to 66 percent in the general U.S. population.**

## Thrifty Educator

***Each month, NEA members offer their best ideas for saving money at the workplace. This month's tips come from Carleen Drozda, a consumer science teacher from Perry (Ohio) High School, and Fritz Burow, an English teacher at East High School in Sioux City, Iowa.***

**Carleen Drozda: "I recycle Tide detergent boxes to make portable file boxes or portfolio cases. First, I start with an empty 16.43 oz.(120-wash load size box). This size is exactly the right size to house Pendaflex hanging folders and other portfolio covers sized for 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper. Next, I cover the box with contact paper and personalize the case with my own decorations. This case is handy for carrying curriculum guides and other necessities. My students enjoy making these cases to use at home, too."**

**Fritz Burow: "I've supplied tissues for my 'non-handkerchief-carrying' students for years. But recently, I found a neat toilet tissue dispenser that I was able to attach to the classroom wall. Now the custodians supply me with some of their short rolls of tissue, which I provide for my class. It's a novelty that saves money at the same time."**

**Do you have a tip for saving money at your workplace? If so, send it along to Thrifty Educator, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, DC 20036. Or E-mail your tip to neatoday@nea.org.**

## Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

Good news for investors! NEA Member Benefits recently introduced a new investment account offered through the NEA Valuebuilder® Mutual Fund Program.

The new NEA Valuebuilder Fund**Select**® offers members more flexibility in investing their money. The new account also simplifies the investing process.

NEA members can now invest in a variety of funds by filling out only one application and writing just one check. That means only one statement to review and one company to call when you have questions.

This new Fund**Select** replaces the previously offered NEA Valuebuilder Investment Account, which is now closed to investments. NEA Member Benefits encourages participants in the old investment account to transfer their balances to the new NEA Valuebuilder Fund**Select**.

For information on balances, transfers, or for information on opening an NEA Valuebuilder Fund**Select** investment account, call Nationwide Investment Services Corporation, toll-free, at 800-325-6434, option 3.

The NEA Magazine Service recently added 69 new titles to the list of magazines offered through the program. Among the new titles: *Barron's*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Latina*, and *Zoobooks*. With discounts of up to 80 percent off newsstand prices, the NEA Magazine Service now offers over 500 titles, with even more to come! Your service and satisfaction is guaranteed with the NEA Magazine Service.

For a complete list of available titles, look up the NEA Magazine Service on the Web at www.neamb.com. Or you can call 800-YOUR-MAG, toll-free.

# An End to the Reading Wars?

**Finally, after years of hard work and consensus building, a concrete, practical set of standards for teaching reading and writing.**

Don't be put off by the word "standards" in the title of the new *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade: Primary Literacy Standards for Kindergarten through Third Grade.*

This important new resource isn't about the old sort of reading standards, guidelines that were often either too broad to offer teachers any real guidance or so specific they left teachers no room for exercising good judgment. The standards in *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade*, by contrast, are actually useful—and even lively.

Created by 22 reading experts assembled by the National Center on Education and the Economy and the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center, these standards come illustrated with vivid examples of the reading and writing real students should be able to do, at each level from K through three.

And, to help make these examples even more vivid, two CDs are packaged with each book. The CDs feature videos that show what children who are reading proficiently at different grade levels sound like.

The examples of student work that *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade* uses to illustrate proficiency aren't limited to end-of-grade achievement. Some of the book's student samples can help track student growth over the course of a a year, others over four years.

The "Primary Literacy Standards" in *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade* range over three areas:

- *Print-Sound Code*, including knowledge of letters and their sounds, phonemic awareness, reading words.
- *Getting the Meaning*, including accuracy and fluency, self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies.
- *Reading Habits*, which, among other points, emphasize the importance of having children read a lot every day.

The book features similar standards for writing, and all these standards are ideal resources for planning instruction. But the standards can be put to other uses as well. Imagine a meeting of a grade-level teacher team. The faculty first look at the samples of student work from the book or the videos, then compare the samples to the actual work of their students.

What fascinating insights might result! The comparisons might lead to significant changes in classroom instruction strategies—or confirm what teachers see as good practice.

At any rate, such discussions would certainly constitute an improvement over what too often passes for professional development in reading, herding staff into a room to hear an "expert" who has never seen them—much less their students—before.

Parents are also likely to appreciate *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade*. Imagine showing parents of a second grader a video of what a proficient second grade reader sounds like. Picture parents sitting with teachers, comparing the work of their children to the examples of acceptable work in the book.

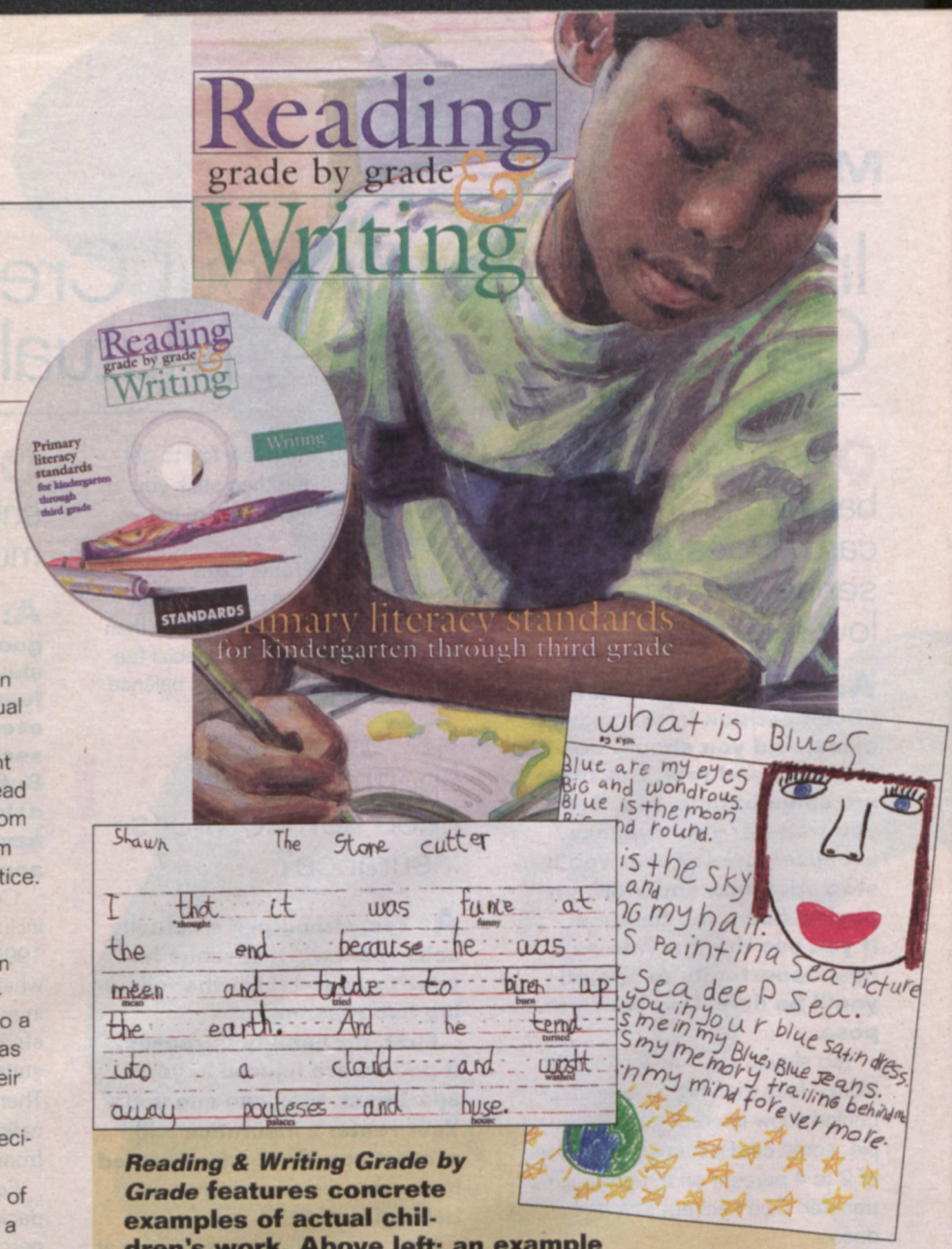
These new standards also clearly indicate the *conditions* necessary for reading success. The standards, for instance, note that libraries of books need to be readily available in every primary classroom, at levels that appeal to students with wide-ranging abilities and backgrounds.

Students, the standards add, need time with books. Kids need to be reading or be read to, on a regular basis, and, to help this process along, *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade* conveniently lists both books for reading aloud and books easy for students to read at each primary grade level. What a wonderful piece of information for teachers to hand to a principal—along with a purchase order request!

The standards in *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade*, please note, have the blessing of both sides in the reading wars, with support from partisans in both the phonics and whole language camps. That may be the best part of all. ✔

***—Barbara Kapinus***

Order *Reading & Writing Grade by Grade* at www.ncee.org. For additional information and phone orders, call 1/888-361-6233. The cost: $45, plus s&h.




***Reading & Writing Grade by Grade* features concrete examples of actual children's work. Above left: an example of a first grader's brief response to the story "The Stone Cutter." At right: a first grader's try at writing a poem. Both examples are followed by clear analyses that can help teachers assess their own students' reading and writing abilities.**

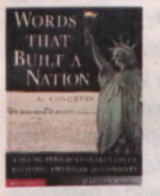
## BOOKS by NEA Members

**Chemistry Quickies**
Vivian Owens. 164 pp. $13.95 plus $2 s&h to Eschar Publications, P.O. Box 1196, Waynesboro, VA 22980, 540/942-3650. Full of chemistry quiz questions, this book is designed to help students study and learn quick chemistry facts. Over 300 questions cover topics such as atomic structure, nuclear chemistry, and chemical reactions. Owens has also written two historical fiction works, *I Met a Great Lady* and *I Met a Great Man.*

**Know Yourself Syntirpously**
Donald L. Womick, Sr. 148 pp. $17.95 plus $2.50 s&h to Vantage Press, 516 West 34th Street, New York, NY 10001, 800/822-3273. To help beef up your vocabulary, turn to this book, which is devoted to the etymology of words related to the human body. From head to toe and bitter to sweet, the Latin, Greek, or Old English word derivations help students to understand the origins of words and to relate them to other word meanings.

**What Year Am I?**
Hope Martin. 195 pp. $25.95 plus $4 s&h to Hope's Books, P.O. Box 1693, Skokie, IL 60076, 888/993-HOPE, fax 847/679-4656. For students in grades 3 through 6, this book offers 365 puzzles—one for every day of the year—that require students to use their math and reading comprehension skills. For each day's date, students are presented with three hints to calculate the year in which a certain event, birth, or invention occurred.

## FREE OR INEXPENSIVE




### One Union

*Words that Built a Nation* is a collection of historic documents such as the Constitution, Gettysburg Address, and Martin Luther King's March on Washington Address. Each historic document includes a brief description of its context and author, plus interesting facts about its impact. $18.95 plus $2.25 s&h from Scholastic Reference, P.O. Box 7502, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 800/325-6149, fax 573/635-5881. On the Web at www.scholastic.com.

### Voices

Some of the most pertinent issues facing young women today—sex, peer pressure, and media images—are discussed in this compilation of responses received during Sister-to-Sister Summits. Teenage girls ages 11-17 talk openly about their experiences of sexual pressure, wanting to fit in, and trying to meet the images of women in the media. Most importantly, *Voices of a Generation* includes solutions proposed by young women to combat these societal influences. From the American Association of University Women Education Foundation, 1111 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/728-7602, fax 202/872-1425. On the Web at www.aauw.org.

### Fight Hate

*Ten Ways to Fight Hate* is a guide for responding to the incidents of hate that too frequently occur in our schools and communities. Defined are 10 principles, with personal stories about people who have acted to push hate out of their communities. Free from Southern Poverty Law Center, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104, 334/264-0286, fax 334/264-0629. On the Web at www.splcenter.org.

### Sleepy Students

Five authors discuss the research surrounding adolescent sleep needs and school day starting times. $10 plus $3 s&h from Phi Delta Kappa International, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402, 800/766-1156, fax 812/339-0018.

### Forest Friends

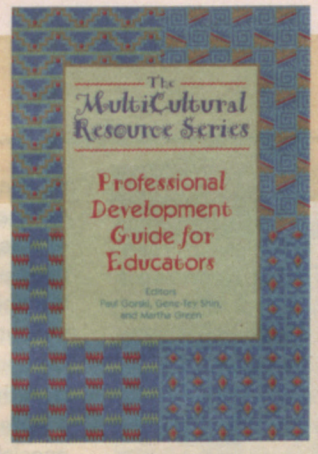
A series of free videos geared to middle-high school students, Friends of the Forest focuses on different environmental issues. Currently available are "Smokejumpers" (how firefighters prevent forest fires), "The River of No Return" (the Salmon River and the effects of human change), and the "Grizzly:Creature in Conflict" (reintroduction of the endangered species). Call Outdoor Life Network at 203/406-2685; www.greatoutdoors.com/oln/fof.html.

### Hands-On Science

Phil Parratore. 212 pp. $30.95 plus $6 s&h to SkyLight, 2626 S. Clearbrook Dr., Arlington Heights, IL 60005, 800/348-4474, fax 847/290-6609. This book contains 90 inexpensive and easy-to-use experiments that science teachers can build into their lesson plans. Grouped by curricular area, difficulty level, and amount of time, these activities-at-a-glance teach students about subjects ranging from chemical reactions and jet propulsion to electricity.

### Seth's Anxiety

Jay Thornton. 44 pp. $3.50 plus $2 s&h to Dramatic Publishing, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098, 815/338-7170, fax 815/338-8981. A production that is ideal for both theater groups and classes, this two-act play focuses on the life of a boy struggling to come to terms with his parents' divorce. Seth meets a girl his age and soon learns that he's not the only young person in the world going through a troubling divorce experience.




## NEW from the NEA Professional Library

**The Multicultural Resource Series: Professional Development Guide for Educators**
Paul Gorski, Gene-Tey Shin, and Martha Green, eds.
NEA Professional Library.
136 pp. $13.95 Item #2005-7-00-F

**Real multicultural education goes far beyond focusing on a particular group for a month. It's ongoing, inclusive teaching that validates the lives and experiences of all children. *The Multicultural Resource Series* is a valuable guide for educators committed to quality learning for all of their students. The first book in the series, *Professional Development Guide for Educators*, offers personal essays written by educators who describe how multicultural education is transforming their teaching. This practical guide also features comprehensive lists of multicultural organizations, publications, national agencies, videos, Web sites, and more.**

**For a free download, check www.nea.org/books. To purchase, call 800/229-4200 toll-free.**

EXCERPT

**WHAT'S INSIDE**

*The Multicultural Resource Series: Professional Development Guide for Educators* is an essential addition to every educator's bookshelf! This handy guide will help you develop creative teaching strategies for every curriculum area, from science to literature. You'll find listings for:

- Books on curriculum and teaching, education reform, multilingual classrooms, and a host of other topics
- Journals and magazines
- Web sites, E-mail forums, and listservs
- Music and book distributors
- Film and video producers

## TVTIPS

### Children in War

*HBO Feature Presentation, January 31, 2000*

*8-10 p.m. ET*

HBO

HBO presents the story of children who have become victims of war. On location in Bosnia, Rwanda (above right), Northern Ireland (above left), and Israel, acclaimed filmmakers Alan and Susan Raymond outline the history of each conflict and capture the experiences of the children who are caught in the middle. The feature-length film explores war-torn neighborhoods, orphanages, schools, and refugee camps. Over the past 10 years, 2 million children have been killed in wars throughout the world.

*KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., provides this listing and others you'll find on page 44. Check out the KIDSNET Web site at www.kidsnet.org.* ✔

## TV TIPS

### The Nickellennium

Nickelodeon and Noggin, all day Saturday, January 1. This 24-hour, commercial-free New Year's special presents visions of the future from the perspective of kids around the world. Nickelodeon has interviewed

thousands of children from 4-14, allowing them to express their hopes and fears about the future from the point of view of their various nations and cultures. The initiative will continue over the next two years with a series of Nickelodeon specials. Visit www.nick.com for a timeline of children's predictions for the next 1,000 years.

### Born to Trouble: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

PBS, Wednesday, January 26, 9-10:30 pm ET, check local listings. This documentary follows the development of Mark Twain's classic novel from the early criticism on it for "low morals," through its installation into the American literary canon, and into the current controversy over whether its satire attacks or reinforces racism. The program opens Culture Shock, a brief series also examining the scandal surrounding Manet's Olympia (January 26, 10:30 pm), the Hollywood Production Code (February 2, 9 pm), and 1920s jazz (February 2, 10 pm). Activities and a teacher's guide are available at www.pbs.org/cultureshock.

### Detention

WB, Saturdays, 10:30-11 am ET. This new, animated series follows the adventures of a group of pre-teen outsiders at Benedict Arnold Middle School, whose personalities range from brainy and independent to reserved and shy. With all the challenges of being 12, the well-meaning friends can't seem to stay out of trouble as they face the usual triumphs and pitfalls of adolescence and middle-school life.

### Fox Family Afternoon Specials

Fox Family Channel, Sundays, 2-4 pm ET, check local listings. This new series of specials features award-winning programs from both the "ABC Afterschool Specials" and "CBS School Break Specials." The programs are designed to help young people and families understand the serious issues that many adolescents face, including discrimination, violence, drug and alcohol abuse, divorce, and teenage pregnancy.

### Freaks and Geeks

NBC, Saturdays, 8-9 pm, check local listings. Set in the early 1980s, this new

comedy-drama series follows the experiences of Lindsay, a rebellious idealist, and her nerdish brother Sam as they struggle to find their place in the fringes of high school society. Though


The NEA-EchoStar Safe Schools Network

## Satellite Broadcast Schedule for Shows 1 – 4

***PROGRAM ONE: "Reasons for Hope"***

Thursday - January 20, 2000
1400-1500 EST (2-3pm)

Community members from Littleton, Colorado, discuss their healing processes and their hopes for the future. Another school system in Columbia, South Carolina, examines a school-community program called "Early Alliance." This segment examines the ways in which home, school, and community can partner in teaching children to act and react in pro-social ways.

***PROGRAM TWO: "Building A Safe and Responsive School Climate"***

Thursday - February 24, 2000
1400-1500 EST (2-3pm)

This broadcast looks at the components that go into establishing a nurturing and predictable school climate. Two communities — Richmond, Virginia, and Eugene, Oregon — show how school, home, and community can work together to help young students succeed in school.

***PROGRAM THREE: "Early Signals of Distress"***

Thursday - March 23, 2000
1400-1500 EST (2-3pm)

How does a system identify and respond to warning signs of distress in children? This program looks at two school communities — one in Los Angeles, California, and the other in Westerly, Rhode Island, and their efforts to understand and heed the messages of young people.

***PROGRAM FOUR: "Forging Community Alliances"***

Thursday - April 27, 2000
1400-1500 EDT (2-3pm)

Creating effective collaborations is necessary to address school and community safety. This broadcast will examine the strong collaborations that have been forged in two communities — Mesa, Arizona, and Buncombe County, North Carolina.

**SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR ALL DATES EXCEPT THOSE DESIGNATED BELOW UNDER "EXCEPTIONS"**

| | |
|---|---|
| EchoStar Coordinates: | 61.5 Echo III |
| EchoStar TV Channel: | 915 |
| C BAND Coordinates: | Galaxy 7, Transponder 02, Freq: 3740 MHz, Vertical Polarity, 91 degrees west. |
| KU BAND Coordinates: | Panamsat SBS 6, Transponder 04, Freq: 11798.5 MHz, Vertical Polarity, 74 degrees west. |

**EXCEPTIONS:**

January 20, 2000

| | |
|---|---|
| KU Band Coordinates: | Panamsat SBS 6, Transponder 09, Freq: 11921.0 MHz, Horizontal Polarity, 74 degrees west. |

February 24, 2000

| | |
|---|---|
| C BAND Coordinates: | Galaxy 6, Transponder 05, Freq: 3800 MHz, Horizontal Polarity, 99 degrees west. |

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You can contact us by voice at (202) 822-7746 or by e-mail at echostar@nea.org

frustrated by confusing issues of adolescence and acceptance, both realize that inclusion in the cool, popular crowd is not the key to high school happiness. Freaks and Geeks offers a sympathetic look at the combination of hope and alienation that many young people face as they navigate high school.

**Mental Engineering**
PBS, weekly, check local listings. This program joins media critic John Forde and a changing panel of journalists, political scientists, attorneys, advertisers, and entertainers as they view and critique the latest popular commercials. By using humor and common sense to deconstruct the commercials' methods of "mental engineering"—the manipulation of consumers through images and simple psychology—the panelists demonstrate an irreverent but effective approach to media literacy. Visit www.mental-engineering.com for listings information.

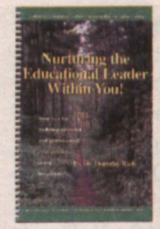
**The More You Know**
NBC, PSAs airing between programs. This series of public service announcements has begun its 11th season of broadcasting brief messages on important topics and social issues. Delivered by popular NBC personalities, the messages this season will focus on such issues as prejudice, hate crimes, and violence prevention. The companion Web site features information on these and other subjects, with links to related services. Visit www.nbc. com/tmyk for more information.

**What's in the News**
PBS, Fridays, check local listings. Designed for use in 4th-7th grade classrooms, this interactive series uses current issues in the news as a springboard for exploring issues in history, geography, civics, world cultures, science, and language arts. Weekly programs alternate between "News Summary," which reviews international issues and events, and "Feature" programs providing in-depth examinations of important subjects in the news. For each program, teachers can review the script and related materials via listserv or at www.witn.psu.edu. Other online materials include schedules, lesson plans, and interactive opportunities for students via E-mail.

**National Geographic Explorer**
CNBC, Saturdays and Sundays, 8-10 pm ET. Now airing on CNBC, this award-winning documentary film series will continue to feature its compelling mixture of science, natural history, and human-interest films. Videos, program schedules and descriptions, along with National Geographic educators' resources, are available at www.nationalgeographic.com.

## FREE OR INEXPENSIVE

**Learning Within**
Learn how to become a more effective teacher, develop your inner qualities, and organize your life with Dr. Dorothy Rich's *Nurturing the Educational Leader Within You!* With questions,




tables, and lists, the guide uses self-evaluation as the first step to becoming a successful teacher and leader, then describes habits of good teachers, the problems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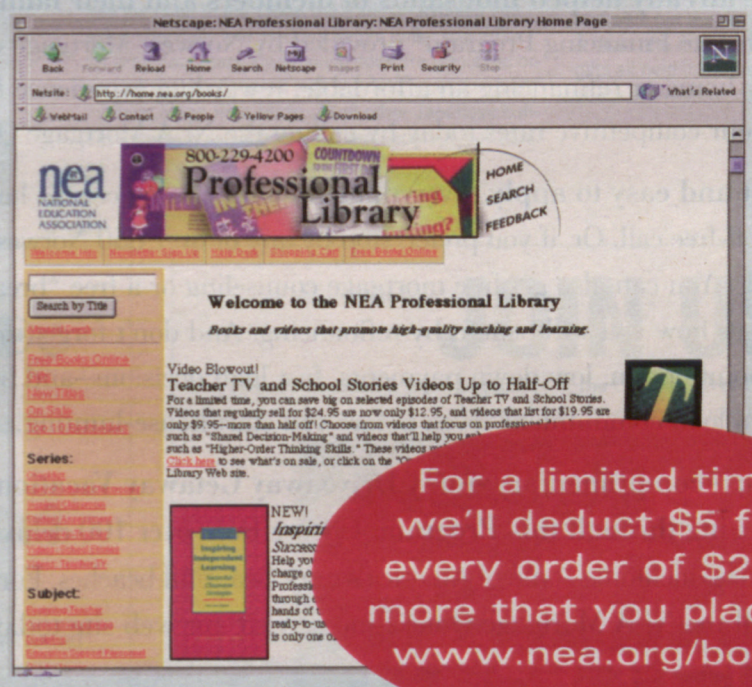
Whether you're a Web power shopper or new to the world of e-commerce, the NEA Professional Library wants to show you how easy it is for educators to find professional development books and videos online.




For a limited time, we'll deduct $5 from every order of $25 or more that you place at www.nea.org/books

Come to the NEA Professional Library Web site to browse books and videos from NEA that promote high-quality teaching and learning. See what's new and what's hot. Shop for gifts for your friends and family in education. And, best of all, you can read the text of selected NEA Professional Library books online—absolutely free! It's a great way to try before you buy.

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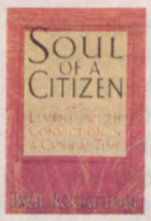
teachers face, and solutions they use to overcome them. Helpful for the beginning teacher, teachers seeking improvement, and the hardened veteran. On the Web at www.dorothyrich.com. $14.00 plus $2.10 s&h from MegaSkills Education Center, 1500 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20005, 202/ 466-3633, Fax 202/833-1400. On the Web at www.megaskillshsi.org.

### Soul of a Citizen

In a world that seems to overpower our actions and beliefs, *Soul of a Citizen* relates the stories of ordinary Americans who challenge the system for what




they believe in. The author, Paul Loeb, builds on their experiences with lessons on activism, politics, and personal relationships in order to show how we all can make our voices heard and our actions count. $15.95 plus s&h from St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10010, 212/674-5151 ext. 645, Fax 212/598-9173. On the Web at www.soulofacitizen.com.

### Maintaining Momentum

Reports findings from the American Institute of Physics' Fourth Nationwide Survey of High School Physics Teachers. The survey reveals why more and more high school students are taking physics: an improvement in teacher qualifications, increased teacher salaries, and increases in laboratory funding. But there are still large disparities in student numbers and achievement levels across gender, racial, and economic lines. Free from the American Institute of Physics, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740, 301/209-3070, fax 301/209-0843. Available for download on the Web at www.aip.org/statistics.

### Tips for Effective Teaching

Developed by two NEA teachers, *Tips and Techniques for Effective Teaching* offers 50 tips for improving classroom management, dealing with challenges in the classroom, and learning effective teaching techniques. $39.95 plus $4.00 s&h from Valley Hill Publishing Co., P.O. Box 5021, Lakeland, FL 33807, E-mail hartman_r@popmail.firn.edu.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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### National Board Certification

Thinking about National Board Certification? NEA Member Benefits, through MBNA America Bank, N.A., is now offering low-cost loans (7.9 percent APR) designed to cover the $2,000 assessment fee. For more information, or to apply, contact 800/603-3953 from 9 am to midnight ET, seven days a week.

### Beginning Teachers

After a successful pilot conference in October, NEA will once again host a Web-based conference for all new teachers early in the new year. The October conference attracted several hundred NEA members from all over the country who were able to "talk" with each other via the virtual forum. Discussions focused on everything from discipline to parent-teacher conferences, to classroom management. The new NEA conference is titled "Staying Afloat" and will offer practical tips and a

(continued on page 48)

# Figure This!
## Math Challenge Partnership

Is there a Friday the 13th in every year? Solving this problem requires mathematical thinking, using patterns and logic to reach a solution. These are skills middle-school math students should know and it's the focus of a new campaign called Figure This!

Partners in the campaign, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, include the Learning First Alliance (NEA and 11 other education groups), and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). The idea is to challenge middle schoolers' mathematical abilities and promote family involvement in middle grades mathematics.

Through problems like "Friday the 13th" the campaign introduces families to interesting and challenging mathematics to explore together.

"Middle school has become a 'make it or break it' time for future educational opportunities," notes Learning First Alliance Executive Director Judy Wurtzel. "Students need to learn challenging mathematics to gain access to the advanced mathematics courses required for college admission or for good jobs after high school."

Figure This! challenges offer concrete illustrations of the mathematical thinking kids need to see. Challenges draw their mathematics from familiar situations like waiting in line to buy tickets. They tap a range of mathematical concepts and skills such as working with large numbers and reasoning about number patterns.

Figure This! challenges will be featured in a variety of media, including radio, television, and print. They will also be available by phone (1-877-GO-SOLVE) and on the Figure This! Web site at www.figurethis.org.

# DIVERSITY Calendar

## January

**Emancipation Day, January 1**
This day commemorates President Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, which was declared on September 22, 1862, but not effective until January 1, 1863. The Proclamation freed few slaves and slavery was not actually ended in the entire United States until the passage of the 13th Amendment on December 18, 1865, but the announcement of the Proclamation did help Americans see the Civil War as a fight to end slavery. Read the original copy of the Proclamation at http://lcweb.loc.gov/ exhibits/treasures/trt028.html.

**Eid Al-Fitr, January 8**
Eid Al-Fitr, or Festival of Breaking the Fast, is an Islamic celebration marking the end of Ramadan, when Muslims express happiness in having completed the fast. The feast begins with the sighting of the new moon and lasts for three days. The Council on Islamic Education (CIE) offers workshops, conferences, and a catalogue of resources to educators. Contact CIE, P.O. Box 20186, Fountain Valley, CA 92728, 714/839-2929. E-mail info@cie.org or visit the Web at www.cie.org.

## February

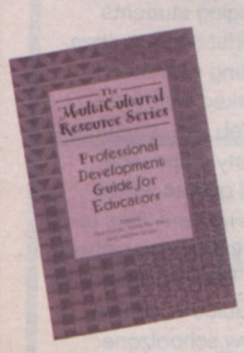
**Tet Nguyen Dan**
Tet Nguyen Dan is the most popular Vietnamese festival, marking the first day of the lunar year and the beginning of spring. Houses and ancestral graves are cleaned, and a ceremonial meal is prepared on the eve of the three-day festival. During the festival, activities include boat races, contests, and dragon dancing. The traditional dragon dance spreads good health and wealth. For more information about Vietnamese culture, history, and music, contact www.explorevietnam.com.

**Carnaval**
An old tradition celebrated in almost every part of the world, Carnaval's origins are unclear. However, each year Trinidad, Tobago, Brazil, Canada, and the United States mark the occasion with costume parades, huge feasts, and parties until dawn. The entire period from Epiphany to Ash Wednesday is known as Carnaval and culminates in Mardi Gras. For Carnaval information around the world and travel information, contact www.carnaval.com.

## March

**Doll Festival, March 3**
Hina Matsuri, or the Doll Festival, in Japan traces its roots back 1,000 years. Originally, the Japanese rubbed paper dolls on their skin in order to rid their bodies of evil spirits. They would then throw the dolls into the river. In the 1700s, the tradition evolved into using clay dolls and mothers began collecting dolls for their daughters. Ceremonial dolls are displayed on tiers of shelves covered with scarlet carpet. For more information on Hina Matsuri and other Japanese holidays, contact asij.ac.jp/elementary/japan/jp_holi.html.

**Purim, March 21**
Beginning at sundown, Purim celebrates the miraculous rescue of the Jews in ancient Persia from a plot by the king's advisors to murder them. Part of the story relates the use of "groggers," or noisemakers, to drown out the sound of the king's advisors' names. A feast, the drinking of wine, and the exchange of gifts all help mark the holiday. For more information, check www.purim.com.


## What Do You Do Once Black History Month is Over?

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Paul Gorski, Gene-Tey Shin, and Martha Green, eds.
136 pp. NEA Members $13.95 Item #2005-7-00-D

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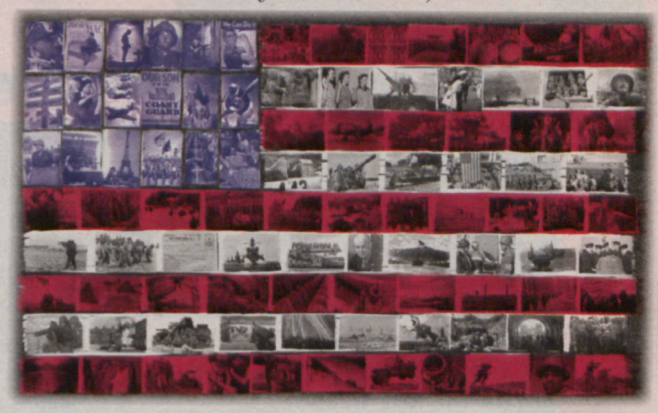

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chance to learn from experienced teachers nationwide. The "Staying Afloat" conference will run from January 17 to February 7, 2000, at www.nea.org/btvc.

### Census 2000

The Census in the Schools Project, "Making Sense of Census 2000," offers educators free materials such as lesson plans, a giant wall map of the United States, and a teacher's guide with grade-specific material. The Census Bureau, in conjunction with Scholastic Inc., also offers a kit for principals to help them get teachers and parents involved in the project. The goal of the project is to develop awareness, participation, and support of Census 2000, which will be used to determine the allocation of resources for schools. Lesson plans integrate the Census into the educational application of math, social studies, and geography skills. Many of the lesson plans are linked to the World Wide Web. All educational materials are available on the Internet at www.census.gov/dmd/www/schindex.htm. Contact Scholastic/Census 2000, 555 Broadway, Room 478, New York, NY 10012, 800/296-5923, Fax 212/343-4867.


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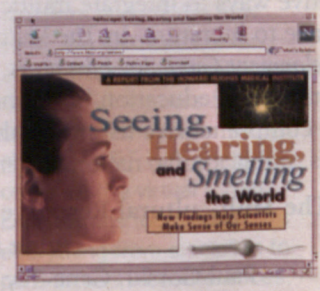
Vision USA is offering free eye examinations for low-income working families. To qualify for free eye care under Vision USA, children and teens must live in a household that has an income below an established level, have no health insurance that covers eye exams, and have had no eye examination within two years. In January, applicants can be screened by phone for eligibility by calling 800/766-4466. Applications are available from Vision USA, 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63141. Applications must be postmarked by January 21, 2000.

## WEB WINNERS

### A Teacher's Guide To Drugs

Drugs are a problem that all of America's youth face, but how do we prepare kids for the consequences of drugs before they are confronted with a decision between using and walking away? With lesson plans, activities, and discussion guides, the Freevibe Teachers' Guide can help educate America's youth about illegal drug use. The guide is designed to give teachers all the necessary tools to steer youth away from drug use by explaining the consequences of using drugs, engaging students through productive activities, and interacting with the Internet. Linked with the Freevibe Web site, students can get lifestyle tips, scenario-based games, entertainment news, and links to other quality drug-prevention Web sites. The Freevibe Teacher's Guide is on the Web at www.schoolzone.org/guide. The Freevibe Web site is located at www.freevibe.com.

### Sensing the World




Learn everything there is to know about our five senses from this Web site. Optical illusions show how our brain functions, diagrams display

how our eyes see color, and scientists discuss how all our senses together define our environment. Fun for the young scientist and scientific enough for educators, this site explains how our everyday activities—like surfing the Web—work biologically in a simple, easy-to-understand manner. On the Web at www.hhmi.org/senses.

### America On Display

The Library of Congress houses more than 110 million items, including the American treasures of Thomas Jefferson's handwritten draft of the Declaration of Independence, Alexander Graham Bell's lab notebook, and Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. The Library now exhibits many of its historical treasures online. Find the Library's Web site at lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/.

### Your Future

For high school students, life after graduation can seem overwhelming, with so many choices to make about which college to attend, how to pay for it, how to find a job. At MyFuture.com, career and college counselors, teachers, and students cab access information about career planning and, most importantly, where to start. With numbers to call and Web site links, students learn about such career options as vocational training, college, and the military. On the Web at www.myfu ture.com.

### Here Comes the Sun

Why are there seasons? What is solar heating? Guided through the site by questions, kids learn about the sun and how it affects life on Earth. With geometric diagrams and solar maps, things heat up in this educational site. On the Web at vortex.plymouth.edu/sun/sun.html.

### Culture Studies

Created by the National Park Service, Culture Themes of Golden Crescent offers information on the area's indigenous people, colonial influences, African-American heritage, plantation agriculture, and resort development. Spanning Georgia and Florida, the Golden Crescent reaches from Savannah south along the Atlantic Coast to Cape Canaveral and then up the Gulf toward Tallahassee. With detailed and rich maps, students and teachers can learn much about the area and its history. Find online at www.cr.nps.orgf/goldcres/index.html.

### Weather for Kids

For kids and for teachers, whether it's winter, fall, or spring, Weather for Kids has fun activity ideas for the classroom and the home. The site is also full of links to information about natural disasters, a homework helper, a weather glossary, curriculum help, and jokes. Sponsored by the National Weather Service, State College, Pennsylvania. Find online at bookend.met.psu.edu/~kathy/kids/kidzweather.htm.

### Kidz Korner

Learn about life on the farm in Michigan. With pictures, an agriculture game, and information on different crops and animals, farm life is brought to your computer via the Internet. Also

included are stories about farms and pets that give an understanding of farm life to kids who don't live near a farm. On the Web at www.mda.state.mi.us/kids/index.html.

### Freebies

Want free stuff? Everything from T-shirts to cards, flowers, software, E-mail, games, mp3s, and screensavers is being given away. With over 900 links to free stuff, the site is organized by category in order for you to take care of all your freebie shopping. On the Web at coolfreebies.com/.

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# in the Light Lane

## Definition, Please

My third graders were asked to use their geography-related spelling words in sentences. We had discussed sparsely and densely populated areas in our map studies, so one of the spelling words was "sparsely." One student's sentence: "My mom always puts sparsely in her soup."

*Dolores Erak*
Aberdeen, Washington

At a retreat for our fifth graders we taught lessons about teamwork, respect, and communication. We asked students to brainstorm ways people can improve their communication. "Use your voice!" one student called out. Another said "Eye contact." A boy chimed in with, "Body functions!" After a moment of stunned silence, our assistant principal asked, "Don't you mean body *language*?"

"Oh, yeah," the boy replied.

*Tera Marker*
Wenatchee, Washington

I gave my seventh grade English students a thesaurus to make their writing more interesting and less repetitious. They seemed to enjoy searching for new synonyms and made many changes on the rough drafts in front of them. But one girl's original draft began, "When I was young." She changed it to, "When I was underdeveloped." She had no idea that she had completely changed the meaning of her sentence.

*Dianne Dunham*
Baldwinsville, New York

## Got Laughs?

**● Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share with other NEA members? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Fax: 202/822-7206. Send E-mail to neatoday@nea.org.**

**● Want a classroom chuckle delivered to your E-mail box once a week? Subscribe to the new "In the Light Lane" mailing list. Just send an E-mail to join-lightlane@list.nea.org (no subject or message needed).**

## Playing the Blues

My husband and I are both music teachers. One morning, our four-year-old daughter, Brooke, found a shoe horn in a dresser drawer. She asked what it was and I told her it was a shoe horn.

A few minutes later, I heard her sighing with frustration. She had gone to my closet, taken a shoe, and placed the shoe horn in the shoe. She had her mouth on the shoe horn with cheeks puffed.

She stopped and said in frustration, "Mommy, I can't get this horn to make a sound!"

*Ronna Brown Ebeling*
Burke, Virginia

Our sixth grade cafeteria manager was busy trying to solve a money problem. She asked the next sixth grade student in line if he was any good at math. The sixth grader replied, "I don't know, but my principal must think so because she has me in three math classes!"

*Jodie E. Goebel*
Punta Gorda, Florida

I often use the overhead machine in math class to explain concepts. Once, I had written several steps in multiple colors—I wanted to make sure everyone in the class had followed the steps. So I asked, "Can anyone tell me how we got from the green to the red here?" while pointing at the key steps. Dylan piped up immediately with, "Ya changed pens, I saw ya!"

*Laura Crowley*
Shoreline, Washington

One of my Algebra students was on the class computer when it failed to properly reboot due to a disk in one of the drives. The error message instructed the student to ". . .press any key to continue." His question to me was, "Which key is that?"

*Joe Martinez*
Long Beach, California

Every other year the opening of school is less hectic for me because of the fact that I loop (keep the same class) up to fourth grade.

On the third day of school this year, while my class was waiting for the walkers bell, one of my students remarked to me and the class, "So Miss Johnson, this thing with having homework the first two nights of school—is that one of the perks of looping that my mom talks about?" I replied, "Absolutely!"

*Shelly L. Johnson*
Orono, Maine

Payday arrived as usual and the principal duly delivered the checks to his staff.

In a third grade classroom where I was teaching for the hour—a student noticed our apparent enthusiasm for receiving this "mail." Innocently he asked the principal what we were excited about.

The principal replied it was our paycheck. With a puzzled expression the student asked, "Do you pay them or do they pay you?"

*Terri Howard*
Ottawa, Kansas

I was helping one of my fifth grade students with his history on his grandfather so he could find and write the richness of detail which makes for interesting reading. This boy's grandfather had 12 siblings and he lived on a farm. In order to get the child to write with a more detailed style, I asked "Why were there so many kids in his family?" I was thinking about how large families helped work the farm and were social security for the farmer and his wife as they aged.

The boy looked at me, blushed a deep red, and said "I guess they did IT a lot back then!"

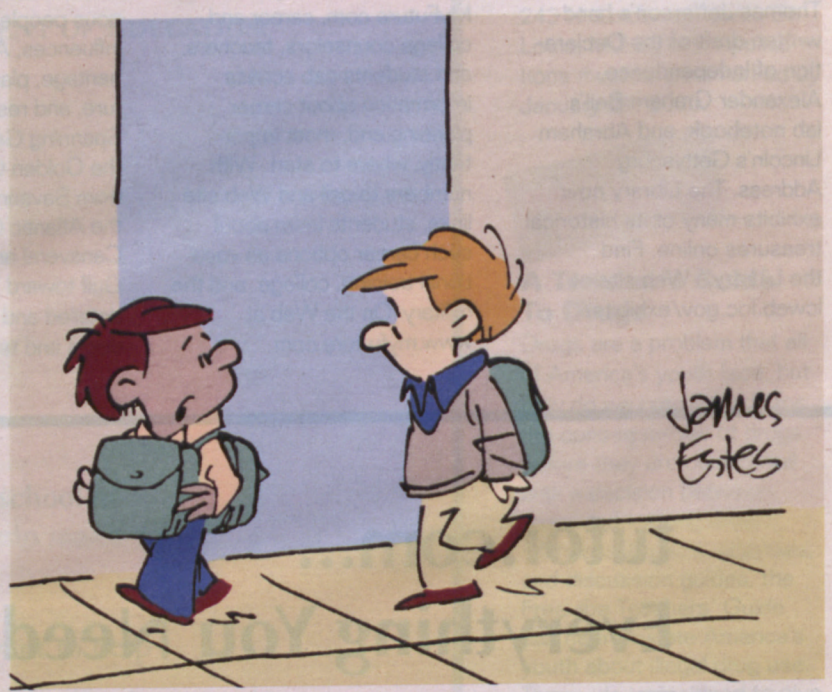
*Christopher Walter*
Christiansburg, Virginia

An experienced paraprofessional was assisting a student in my classroom. She was seated next to the child's desk and her heavily varicose-veined leg was exposed below the knee. The pixieish, blond, spectacled second grader whispered seriously, "Mrs. Smith, I like your flower tatoo!" On the following day several staff members adorned their legs with press-on flower tatoos!!!

*Susan Guerriero*
Farmington, Connecticut

Checking on my kindergartners recognition of numbers, I had them write several of the lower ones. Then I asked if they could think of a really big number and write it. I expected 20 or so, but what I got was several papers with enormous numeral 7's.

*Barbara Pollak*
Manalapan, New Jersey




*"With just one or the other, I tip over."*

Campaign posters for student council officers lined our school hallway. One poster was decorated with a 5x7 photo of a fifth grade student running for the office of president. A first grader paused and pointed to the photo. "Is he lost?" he asked a teacher nearby.

*DiAnna Farmer*
Tempe, Arizona

While discussing Hurricane Floyd, I mentioned that Cape Canaveral was shut down, except for a skeleton crew. From the looks on my fourth graders' faces, I knew they were puzzled.

I asked them what a skeleton crew was. One boy said, "Someone who picks up the bones." Another said, "People who collect dead bones." I just laughed and explained the expression.

*Dorothy Gipson*
Forest Park, Ohio

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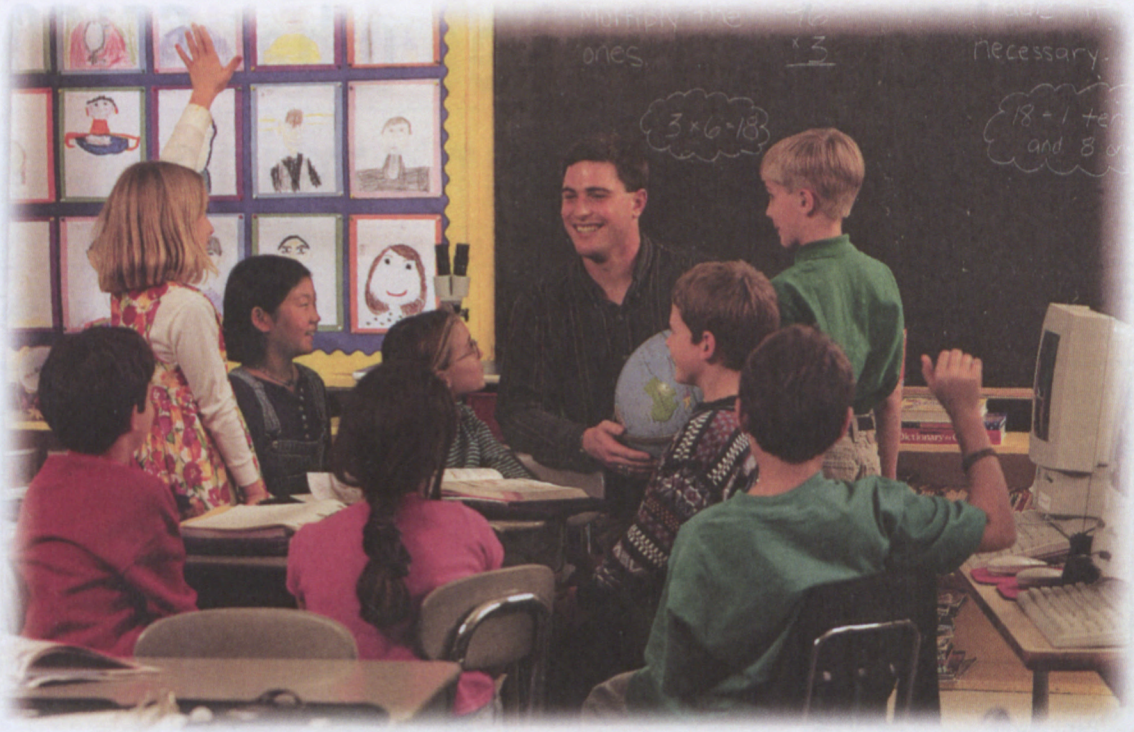


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- Emergency Road Service
- Free rate quote

But that's just the beginning of the great savings. You may also save if you're age 50 and over. And if you drive a safe car, GEICO offers discounts for anti-lock brakes, airbags and safety belts. Further, in most states our multi-car discount saves you up to 25% on each car you insure under the same policy.

GEICO is rated A++ (Superior) by the A.M. Best Company, leading analysts of the insurance industry. What's more, with GEICO you get the convenience of complete 24-hour service every day of the year.

The choice is yours. You can go on paying high car insurance rates, or you can pick up the phone and call **1-800-841-5660**. Be sure to have your current policy handy, so we can tell you in a matter of minutes exactly how much you could save.

## Call 1-800-841-5660, now.

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# Use this chart to see what GEICO could save you on your car insurance.

| YOUR CURRENT COVERAGE | | YOUR CURRENT PREMIUM | GEICO PREMIUM | YOU SAVE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bodily Injury:<br>_____ Per Person<br>_____ Per Occurrence | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Property Damage:<br>_____ Per Occurrence | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Personal Injury Protection or Medical Payments:<br>_____ Per Person | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Uninsured Motorists:<br>_____ Per Person<br>_____ Per Occurrence<br>_____ Property Damage | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Comprehensive (Your Car):<br>_____ Deductible | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Collision (Your Car):<br>_____ Deductible | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Rental Reimbursement:<br>_____ Per Disablement | CAR 1 | | | |
| | CAR 2 | | | |
| Government Employees Insurance Co. • GEICO General Insurance Co. • GEICO Indemnity Co. • GEICO Casualty Co. These shareholder-owned companies are not affiliated with the U.S. Government. GEICO auto insurance is not available in MA or NJ. GEICO: Washington, DC 20076. | | **GEICO SAVES YOU THIS MUCH....** | | **$** |

Call GEICO today at **1-800-841-5660** for a free quote. We'll give you a line-by-line rate comparison with your current coverage so you can see the savings. Where available, you can use your MasterCard, VISA, Discover®Card or personal checking account for instant coverage. For better service when you call, please have your current policy and all vehicle identification numbers and driver's license numbers handy.

Call 1-800-841-5660, 24 hours a day, for a great value on car insurance.
Or check the yellow pages for a local office near you.

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*Detach and keep in your wallet*

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